

# REPRESENTATIVE ESSAYS

Part II  
LAMB to STEVENSON

SELECTED AND EDITED WITH  
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY  
S G DUNN M A  
*Professor of English Literature Allahabad  
University*

AND  
AMARANATHA JHA M A,  
*Reader in English Allahabad University*

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# INTRODUCTION

## I ON THE ESSAY

No word in the English vocabulary, except, perhaps the name of gentleman, has suffered such inappropriate, if not ignoble use as the word 'essay'. It may be seen on the title page of a philosophic treatise by a learned Locke and at the heading of some halting exercise by a school-boy. In either case the thing does represent, it is true, an attempt, and thus, it may be urged in justification, is the meaning of the word. But, surely, it is not of attempts like these that we are thinking when we use the term, for these we can find easily another label, let us reserve this brand for the genuine article, which is I take it, an essay or adventure of the spirit into regions, familiar or unfamiliar, of speculation, not

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a commissioned or definite enterprise, as it were, for which we have received our orders or plan of campaign but such a riding forth into the unknown in search of an adversary worth our fighting as the knights of old were wont to make. On such an excursion we may wander where we will for the essayist there is no law but that which guided the inhabitants of THULEMA "Fais qui vous verra" or as Victor Hugo afterwards adapted it "Thou shalt do what thou wilt."

Manifestly such freedom is not for the untrod the essay is the worst of all literary forms for the novice to experiment with. Hence our educationists prescribe subjects and demand schemes of treatment, the results make dreary reading. Let us give up this pretence of "teaching" the art of the essay. We can train the student more practically to write by other methods. It is futile to expect from the apprentice to the guild of literature work that can be done only by the experienced craftsman.

For the true essay is the production of maturity. Acquired skill in words is the less important part of the equipment for it. Many a man has that, and yet fails with his essay. The deft juggler with phrases the brilliant master of epigrams the witty compounder of paradox—these may amuse us for a time, but will not satisfy us. They say either too much or too little they dogmatise or they irritate. Bacon himself that idol of the literary histories,—how many people enjoy him as an essayist? For worldly wisdom neatly expressed as a maker of maxims, an English Solon, he stands supreme but as an essayist he must yield place. I dare to say to Addison, Lamb and many another. Why? He had the technical skill he had experience of life, he had the philosophic mind—though one might well doubt it from some of his letters! Perhaps after all it is a matter of temperament, it is your attitude towards life as well as your mode of expressing that attitude which determines

finally your rank as an essayist. And a temperament never defines itself fully, is never expressed with any certainty, until it has been tried by time. That is why. I repeat, the true essay is the production of maturity. A young man may have the right temperament, but he will rarely give it play till he is past the period of strenuous physical activity; he must let it mellow, like a vintage wine, before it is fit to be poured out in the essay, clear yet full of body, with a bouquet that, as one tastes it, awakens memories, induces quiet thought, warms the heart, and stimulates the brain. It has been well said that the essay is a thing to rest in, and a man must attain some measure of peace in himself before he can beget this feeling in others. Few men reach this felicity within forty years, some men never find it at all; but of those that do are the essayists. The lyric is the cry of youth; the essay is the communicated meditation of middle age.

One may compare the good essayist with the good talker. At all ages we readily engage in talk, but there is a time of life when talk is at its best. In a company of young men conversation usually becomes an argument. Opinions are held firmly and expressed vehemently, each has made his decision in his own mind already, and talks to convince the others, or else he cares nothing for the subject, has no feeling about it, and talks merely to refute the prevalent view as that emerges in the course of the discussion. Among the old at the other extreme, conversation gives way to the monologue. The garrulity of age is as fatal to it as the self-assertiveness of youth. Only among men of the middle years, who are old enough not to care about a verbal victory, yet young enough to appreciate a new aspect, does conversation yield its right pleasure. The good talker is tentative, he puts forward and takes back, he will himself suggest the objections to his own theory, he adapts



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himself as the subject widens or contracts :  
he never hunts alone.

Even so is the good essayist. He is ever mindful of that invisible circle about him, his readers. He is concerned, it is true, with himself—searching within his own mind—but his purpose looks beyond himself, he would explain the outer by the inner—the experience of others by analysing his own. We are but seldom in the mood for such work even though the temperament of the essayist be ours by nature, till the years begin to be countable behind us. There comes then a time when we can take pleasure in the play without regard to our own part in it, we can be content even with the role of Mr. Spectator. The zest of life is still with us, but, looking on delights us almost as much as joining in the game. We linger over the wine instead of gulping it down. We are grown critical and do not accept all that is offered. We are no longer in that fever of acquisitiveness which in youth urged us on, as if we

believed that we must indeed gather the roses ere they be withered nor let any flower of the spring pass us by. We have learned now that if we miss this moment another fraught with equal significance is coming. Seed time and harvest shall not fail we say blossoms as far will delight us in their season when these have fallen to the ground. We can afford to wait for the best nor would we have too much even of that. We have lost none of that interest in ourselves which kept us so occupied in youth but the mystery has deepened we have taken others into our hearts and we cannot think of ourselves apart from them. And with this extension of our personality we have learnt tolerance and are on the way to equanimity. We are willing to discuss anything with anybody troubling ourselves not at all about the issue but for the sake of chance glimpses of the truth which we may catch by the way and because anything human delights us. We are, in short, at the essay period of life.

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It will be found, I suggest, that the best essays in our literature have been written in these middle years. Lamb comes first to my mind. He was forty-five when he published the first essay of *Elia* in the September issue of the *London Magazine* for 1820. The best work of Addison appeared from 1709 to 1712. Born in 1672 he came to the essay earlier than Lamb, but even so he was well over thirty-five, more than half-way upon the road of his life. One might go on to pass in review all our essayists from Cowley to the gentleman who writes so pleasantly to-day in the columns of the *Evening News* as the "Londoner", all their best work would be found in their middle years. The case of Stevenson may be quoted against me: he was writing essays, it may be said, at twenty-five. But I would not be prepared to concede that "Virginibus Puerisque" contains his best work, nor that Stevenson should rank among the true essayists. Are we not in his essays dazzled a little

by the brilliancy of them conscious to our discomfort of the workmanship, aware too often of a "palpable design upon us which is as hateful surely in an essay as in poetry." These are the faults of youth. Is it not true too that illness ages a man? Is there not abundant evidence in these essays in 'Ordered South' notably that the life of the invalid, which Stevenson was at that time living causes prematurely just that quiescence which normally comes later? If Stevenson be claimed, then as an essayist, the exception may well be explained.

If the middle years are the true season for the essay in the individual so also in the life of the nation there seem to occur periods specially congenial to its development. The seventeenth century which gave us so many essayists did not produce one to whom we can point as typical of the best. Not till the eighteenth century do our writers in prose settle down as it were at ease in their inheritance with leisure to look about them and chat

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amused himself with this kind during the e years of retirement at Stratford, what a kindly book of comments on our sublunary life might now have been our companion ! The ' Tempest,' indeed is saturated with the essence of the essay and throughout the plays in soliloquy and aside, the essayist looks out at us. Then a little later what happiness for us, had Mr Pepys lost the use of his legs, and been compelled to stay at home instead of going abroad as was his wont bent upon pleasure and business ! We can guess from the diary how delightfully he might have written, a Montaigne of the Restoration. But probably our greatest loss is Cowper. It is too tantalising to think of what might have happened to his reverend friend, who gave him so much unwise advice had for once been sensible and besought him to divert his melancholy by the writing of essays. Then we might have boasted of an English Horace—in prose. But Fate ordained that we should be left the letters

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only and we must be thankful—as who is not ?—for them. Yet there is a way of dodging fate. Imaginary conversations have given us good sport. Will no one write for us a series of imaginary essays? Let him who reads this book and imbibes the spirit of the essay, ask himself if he be not the man for that delectable undertaking.



## II HISTORY OF THE ESSAY

Bacon had in his mind the early works of Theophrastus and Seneca when he said of the essay. The word is late though the thing is ancient. But of the essay as we now know it as a distinct literary form the earliest writer was the polished Frenchman, Montaigne. It was originally as Bacon puts it in the form of 'dispersed meditations'. Even so late as Johnson's time it was described only as a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, indigested piece, not a regular and orderly performance. But in modern English literature nothing is more obviously the result of careful thought and conscientious writing than the essay. A history of this evolution from its early stage in Bacon's time to the modern form is practically a history of English prose through three centuries.

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Bacon (1561-1626) who is frequently remembered in the well-known line of Pope's *Epistle* as "the wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind," and who exhibited a touching faith in posterity by the entry in his will, "for my name and memory. I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next ages," curiously enough despised the English language of which he is a chief ornament. To Prince Charles he sent his *Advancement of Learning* in Latin, saying "It is a book that will live, and be a citizen of the world, as English books are not." Even his *Essays* were translated with his sanction into Latin and Italian. He wrote, then, in English not because he anticipated any future for it but because it was easier "to speak as he would." The *Essays*, or to give the book its full title, *Counsels, Moral and Political*, is a collection of disjointed thoughts and ideas noted down as they occurred, and at leisure shaped into a connected whole. He might, perhaps, like Hamlet have

frequently remarked. Meet it as I set it down. But the structure is nevertheless loose, partly remarks wise maxims splendid commonplaces are just mentioned and the busy active mind rushes off to note other sayings and thoughts. these are left undeveloped sometimes indeed, obscure. As Dean Church observes. These short papers say what they have to say without preface and in literary undress without a superfluous word without the joints and bands of structure. they say it in brief rapid sentences which come down, sentence after sentence like the strokes of a great hammer. It has been suggested that a good title for Bacon's Essays would be Human Nature and How to Manage it. This would indicate the wide range of subjects with which Bacon deals.

Among other writers who followed Bacon's example and wrote what may be described as the 'aphoristic essay' may be mentioned Sir William Cornwallis whose essays are varied in subject, but rather superficial in matter.

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In 1601 Robert Johnson published his *Essaies, or rather Imperfect Offers* mainly dealing with education. Ben Jonson's Discoveries (1641) containing essays on Art, on Style on Government, belongs also to this group to which too, may be assigned Selden's Table-Talk which shows a complete mastery of the aphoristic style.

Though Bacon had ostensibly as his model, Montaigne, he does not make his essay in any degree intimate or personal; it is severely impersonal. He never once intrudes his own self; it is always completely in the background. His successors, Overbury (1581-1613), who died such a violent death, and Carle (1601-1665), leave the essay yet more impersonal, cold and detached. They are rather in erecting as furnishing an example of a new variety of the essay. As has been well pointed out, the type of essay that flourished during the seventeenth century is an interesting example of fiction. Its debt to Theophrastus is large, but Seneca and the dramatists also exercised an

influence. There is a close connection between Overbury and Earle on the one hand and the Jonsonian Comedy of Humours on the other: they both conceive of virtues and vices as embodied in individual men. To this group of "Character-writers" belong Joseph Hall (*Characters of Virtues and Vices* 1608), Breton (*Characters upon Essays, Moral and Divine*, 1615), Mynshul (*Essays and Characters* 1618), Lupton (*London Quartered into several Characters*, 1632), Fuller (*The Holy and Profane State* 1641). It is of the last that Charles Lamb says: "The golden works of the dear, fine silly old angel."

Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) is a writer of a different stamp. He was born in an age of transition. His biographer says, "He was the greatest and most intelligent of a little group that handled facts, but delighted to take refuge from them in speculation." For the first time in English prose we find in Browne an author to whom form alone is the

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main concern, and the matter or substance takes a secondary place. He cultivates style, and to the student of style, Browne is precious. He loves writing for its own sake; he is drunk with the music of words. His investigations may or may not be accurate, his language is always superb. Pater speaks of his "learned sweetness of cadence" and Dr. Johnson is right, as he usually is, when he says, "He must be confessed to have augmented our philosophical diction; and in defence of his uncommon words and expressions, we must consider that he had uncommon sentiments, and was not content to express in many words that idea for which any language could supply a single term." It is as a conscious stylist that Browne is to be studied.

With the advent of Cowley (1618-1667) we find the essay resuming the personal note which it had under Montaigne. Dryden (1631-1700) is the next considerable figure. If it is true that in satire and declamation in verse he is unrivalled it

must be admitted that he is equally great in prose. His style is clear forcible and direct. Of the critical essay he may be said to be the originator. "It is in his essays and prefaces that his best and most charming and delicate work is found. In a way they begin modern English prose. Earlier writing furnishes no equal to their colloquial ease and the grace of their expression. And they contain some of the most acute criticism in the language—'classical' in its tone but with its respect for order and tradition always tempered by good sense and wit and informed and guided throughout by a taste whose catholicity and sureness was unmatched in the England of his time.

We come next to Addison (1672-1719), and Steele (1672-1729). In their hands the essay both changed its form and modified its function. It became social, the personal note was retained but an element of gentle satire was introduced. Addison was busy in politics

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but still found time for numerous literary undertakings. The rise of the periodical was instrumental in changing the form of the essay, and Addison was a frequent contributor to periodicals. Steele's *Tatler* was started in 1709; in 1711, jointly the two started the *Spectator*. It was to these two as well as to the *Guardian*, that Addison and Steele contributed those essays which are still read with delight. Steele supplied the emotion, Addison the intellect. The latter is the better known, but the two along with Defoe (1663-1731) are equally responsible for the establishment of the prose periodical essay as a prevailing literary mode. Addison's style has been described as 'always equable, always easy, without glowing words or pointed sentences.' Johnson's tribute is, of course, famous: "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but no coarse, elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."



Johnson (1709-1784) Goldsmith (1728-1774) Home (1711-1776) are the next three great essayists of the century. Of the first Goldsmith had said 'he has nothing of the bear but his skin' beneath a rough exterior and despite rude manners beat a very gentle and considerate heart. He attempted poetry, tragedy, journalism, fiction, biography, travel letters and to use his own words on Goldsmith touched nothing, which he did not adorn. It is perhaps true that he was greater than his books as has been recently said, his ponderous foot trod heavily, and his *Rambler* and *Idler* repose on the dusty shelves of old libraries, consulted occasionally by the curious and then hastily replaced. Smollett called him "the Great Cham of Literature" and yet of the two hundred essays of the *Rambler* hardly more than two or three are read now. His greatness is based rather on the *Lives of the Poets*, where biography and criticism are mingled in the essay form, shrewd

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comments on morals. literature and life abound and an unfailing light is shed on the personality of the writer himself."

Goldsmith was much more lovable, less taciturn and more human than his great friend. His *Citizen of the World* shows his bright and spontaneous humour; it is important in the history of literature as clearly marking the relation between the essay and the novel. Thackeray, himself a great novelist, paid this tribute to the memory of Goldsmith: "His humour delighting us still, his song fresh and beautiful as when he first charmed with it his words in all our mouths his very weaknesses beloved and familiar—his benevolent spirit seems still to smile upon us: to do gentle kindnesses, to succour with sweet charity: to soothe, caress and forgive: to plead with the fortunate for the unhappy and the poor."

He turned the essay into more serious and thoughtful lines. He wrote *Essays Moral and Philosophical*, which

bears the impress of a mind singularly rich and original. He was equally influential in the region of historical writing. His style was graceful and spirited. Sir James Fitz James Stephen describes his later essays as "perfect models of quiet, vigorous and yet graceful composition as full of thought as any writing need to be yet never so much compressed as to impose needless labour on the reader."

By this time we approach the end of the Age of Goodyense and the Age of Humourism is to be betrayed. Gradually and steadily the essay has been developing. It has now a more or less recognised place in literature, it is now beginning to rival the lyric as a popular form of literary expression. The newshott has been superseded by the Review and essays of a more solid kind more scholarly less "occasional and slight" are called for. New theories of poetry are being propounded they have to be discussed. New literary movements are spreading.

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their consideration is necessary. The bounds of knowledge are widening: life is getting busy—learning is becoming specialised. Brief and popular surveys, historical and literary, are required. Criticism of new books is called for. The essayists consequently, diverted their energies along these new directions. *The Edinburgh Review* supported by Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Brougham and Macaulay, *The Quarterly Review*, with its contributors Gifford and Croker and Walter Scott; *Blackwoods*, assisted by "Christopher North" (John Wilson)—are all largely responsible for the turn that the essay now took. These and their successors in the Review tradition, Lockhart, Leigh Hunt, De Quincey, are responsible for the elasticity of English prose. The early reviewers held in their own day a unique position: their judgments might have been mistaken, those alone were publicly deliberated; prejudice and bias might have distorted their vision, few were free in that generation from these besetting sins.

But they knew their own mind they did not prevaricate and temporise thus will never do on the *Excursion* was brutal but it was straightforward. Their place is high is pioneers in the region of the criticism. Together with the mention may be made of a un-taking honorable and voluminous writer Southey (1774-1843) who was a regular contributor to the *Quarterly Review* for an important article in which he would receive one hundred pounds. Speaking of his *Life of Wesley Coleridge* said "The favourite of my library among many favourites, the book I can read for the twentieth time when I can read nothing else at all. Time has not been kind to Southey mainly it may be suspected because of his unwarranted excursions into the realm of poetry and except for his *Nelson* he is mentioned with respect but not with enthusiasm.

The publication in 1825 of the essay on Milton by Macaulay (1800-1858) marks an epoch in the history of the essay Biography and criticism which Johnson

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was almost the first to combine are further joined together with fuller knowledge of facts and less prejudice and greater charm. Macaulay had undoubtedly his own defects—excessive love of colour, fondness for antithesis, striving for effect, political bias, but in the biographical essay—Milton, Johnson, Bunyan, Goldsmith, Clive, Pitt, Warren Hastings and many others—he is unsurpassed. His *Lord Holland* is at once historical portraiture and personal tribute. Political prejudice apart, it is an essay of supreme merit. His Essay on Milton is equally brilliant. "We think that as civilisation advances, poetry almost necessarily declines," bold, unhesitating, challenging statements such as this abound in his essays.

Carlyle (1795-1881) is so near to our own age that we are apt to forget that he wrote for the *Edinburgh Review* as long ago as 1822. Three years later he contributed a Life of Schiller to the *London Magazine*. After his German enthusiasms, his enthusiasm for Burns and Scott

was Keen and his essay on the former, published in the *Edinburgh Review* is a masterful study of a personality who in the words of Lord Rosebery, appeals, most of all to the imagination and affection of mankind. We are all familiar with his mannerisms his love of paradox his want of fluency. Taine described his style as 'exaggerated and demoniacal' it is erratic, elliptic abrupt. But he always writes with knowledge is never obscure and never false. Ruskin said 'What can you say of Carlyle but that he was born in the clouds and struck by the lightning' which withers while it immortalises. Energy and sincerity are never wanting nor thoroughness and it has been truly remarked that his essays are intrinsically more complete and throw more real light on character than whole volumes of ordinary memoirs.

This period, early 19th century witnessed a remarkable development of the essay as indeed of the lyric, of painting,

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of the general movement for freedom in all phases of life and art. The interesting point in literature is that many writers were both poets and essayists, and that, unconsciously perhaps, both were striving for a common end, freedom from the bondage of classicism and hide-bound convention. *Coleridge* (1772-1834), *Wordsworth*, (1770-1850), *Southey*, *Shelley* (1792-1822), *Landor* (1775-1864), *Lamb* (1775-1834), *Scott* (1771-1832) were all both poets and essayists. But there were others who were prose-writers only. *Hazlitt* (1778-1830), *De-Quincey* (1785-1850), *Leigh Hunt* (1784-1850) are the other great names of this period.

*Coleridge's Biographia Literaria*, *Aids to Reflection* and contributions to the *Friend* establish for him a leading position among romantic critics. His lectures on Shakespeare and other poets mark a new stage in the development of Shakespearean criticism. His achievements fell considerably short of the



promise, but both in some of his beautiful poems and critical pieces he is original thoughtful and full of good sense. Writing in 1800 he said, 'I abandon poetry altogether. I leave the higher and deeper kinds to Wordsworth the delightful popular, and amply dignified to Southey and reserve for myself the honourable attempt to make others feel and understand their writings, as they deserve to be felt and understood. Coleridge is among the first to acknowledge interpretation to be one of the aims of criticism.

Wordsworth in his Prefaces explained and defended the theories which he held about poetry. Like Milton he was the master of a noble prose style like him he was misunderstood and felt constrained to defend himself. Byron ridiculed him Shelley and Keats did not understand him. And no wonder for he was an innovator.

Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* is another illustration of the statement that all great poets are good prose-writers. He

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is diffuse, he is ornate, his sentences are overloaded with metaphor and simile: not infrequently he is carried away by the exuberance of his imagination. But his style is always graceful and always harmonious.

Walter Savage Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* achieved the unique distinction of becoming a classic, immediately on publication. Sidney Colvin speaks of "the strength, dignity, and harmony of his prose style." He adhered to a classical regularity of language and to a classical composure and restraint of style: hardly a logical or grammatical slip can be detected in his writings. "What I write," he said himself a little grandiloquently, "is not written on slate, and no finger, not of Time himself, who dips it in the clouds of years, can efface it."

Landor imparted into his writings the personal, subjective note which the last century had almost banished. He knew that he could interest his readers in himself. What he felt and thought and saw

he expressed His style is so free, so flowing, so intimate that it appears to be almost like conversation He takes every one into his confidence Like good talk, his essay runs off from one subject to another, grave, now and again gay, nothing is too important or too trivial Snatches of old reading—with occasional misquotations—and homely illustrations abound The distinction between him and Addison has been well expressed thus “Addison is gay and witty and delightful, but he only plays at being human, Lamb’s essays—the translation into print of a heap of idiosyncrasies and oddities and likes and dislikes, and strange humours—come straight and lovably from a human soul The *Essays* and *Last Essays of Elia* bring us into touch with the personality of Lamb here, if anywhere, it is true that the style is the man No praise can be too high for the writer who, getting over the tragic circumstances of his own life, his nervous and excitable nature, can yet draw for us

critical opinions are such as have occurred without much or profound study to one too much of whose time has been spent in that delightful land of fiction the seducing mazes of fictitious narrative

The essayist who is to be mentioned next, Hazlitt was an Edinburgh Reviewer and a writer of great charm and freshness. As a critic his position is assured his *Spirit of the Age* *Shakespeare Characters*, *Lectures on the English Poets*, *English Comic Writers* are all models of acute criticism, fully bearing out his own principle of literary criticism that 'it should reflect the colour, the light and shade the soul and body of a work.' But criticism apart he is delightful as an essayist, pure and simple. "We are all mighty fine people," declared Stevenson 'but we cannot write like Hazlitt.' He contributed about forty essays to Leigh Hunt's *Round Table*. Mr Birrell says 'Montaigne was in Hazlitt's opinion the first person who in his essays led the way to this kind of writing among the moderns, being the first who

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the image of a singularly lovable, gentle, and quiet character, which we accept as that of the writer. He was true, it has been remarked to Charles Lamb to the shy, sensitive, stuttering, brave, stricken, poor, gay, true-hearted gentleman whom everybody loved.

Scott great alike in fiction and in ballad-poetry, turned his attention in the dark years preceding his end, to critical and biographical writing. His *Biographical and Critical Notices of Eminent Novelists*, though the production of his declining years, contains a vast fund of information and is of great value as containing the opinions on novelists of one who was himself a master of the craft. It was, it had to be, a pot-boiler; the heroic knight had to stoop to literary hackwork. Yet the genius of Scott makes even these sketches luminous. In the *Advertisement*, Scott thinks it necessary to observe that the lives do not lay claim to the merit of much research, being taken from the most accessible materials, and that the

critical opinions are such as have occurred without much or profound study to one too much of whose time has been spent in that 'delightful land of faerie' the seducing mazes of fictitious narrative.

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had the courage to say as an author what he felt as a man. Hazlitt had plenty of this kind of courage—put a pen in his hand and he would say anything." Hazlitt is never dull, always full of a healthy zest for the good things of life. full of excitement. never insipid. "Give a man," he says in his *Essay on the Fight*, "a topic in his head, a throb of pleasure in his heart, and he will be glad to share it with the first person he meets." The tradition of Lamb is carried on by him.

De Quincey wrote, of course. The *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* and also *Essays on the Lake Poets*, *Murder Considered as a Fine Art* and several essays contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine*. Coleridge, De Quincey, Francis Thompson have all felt the depressing effect of opium, momentary excitement "purchased at the expense of prolonged mental and physical prostration" De Quincey occasionally rises to heights of genuine impassioned eloquence. urges a return to former models, often is penetrating, but his normal level of

attainment is poor. His style is frequently elaborate and lofty—the *Vision of Sudden Death* is an instance, he could be shrewd and sensible as a critic—the *Essay on Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth* may be cited—but generally the dull narcotic perplexed and retarded and he was content.

Leigh Hunt is still read. *Men and Women*, *Imagination and Fancy*, *Wit and Humour* contains some of his best works but even his best is hardly very good. His place in the midst of greater writers is due not to any supreme excellence in his own achievements, but rather to the undoubted influence which he exercised over his contemporaries. Professor Saintsbury puts it,

The praise of giving the last special turn to the essay is due more than to any one else, to Leigh Hunt. As Keats took hints from this unequal writer in verse so did Lamb and Hazlitt in prose, and from these three came all the essayists and all the essays of the English nineteenth century.



## INTRODUCTION

These were the chief essayists in the first half of the 19th century: thereafter the difficulty is mainly one of selection. Hardly any writer of note who did not write essays. From the growing popularity of magazines and reviews, from the spread of literature though not of learning, from the appalling hurry and bustle of life,—from whatever cause, the essay now superseded in popularity almost every other literary form. *Newman* (1801-1890), *Matthew Arnold* (1822-88), *Ruskin* (1819-1900) *Bagehot* (1826-1877), *Walter Pater* (1839-1894), *Emerson* (1803-82), *Lowell* (1819-1891), *Thackeray* (1811-1863), *Froude* (1818-1894), *Herbert Spencer* (1820-1903), *Lord Avebury* (1834-1913), *Andrew Lang* (1844-1912), *J. A. Symonds* (1840-1893), *R. H. Hutton* (1826-1897), *Oscar Wilde* (1856-1900), *R. W. Church* (1815-1890), *Leslie Stephen* (1832-1904) *Morley*, (1838-1923), *Freeman* (1823-92), *Green* (1837-1883), *Huxley* (1825-1895), *Tyndall* (1820-1893), *Stevenson* (1850-1894), *Richard Jefferies* (1848-1887), *Edmund Gosse* (1849),

## HISTORY OF THE ESSAY

*Augustine Birrell* (1850), *Walter Raleigh* (1861-1924), *A G Gardiner* (1865), *W B Feats* (1865), *H G Wells* (1866) *E V Lucas* (1868) *John Galsworthy* (1867) *Arnold Bennett* (1867), *Dean Inge* (1860) *G K Chesterton* (1871) *Richard Middleton*, *Maurice Heiclett* (1923), *Vernon Lee*, *A C Benson* *J Middleton Murry*—the list is inexhaustible. Opinions may differ as to the future of the lyric or the drama for the future of the essay there need be no misgiving.

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No writer on the Essay can fail to acknowledge the wealth of information contained in Hugh Walker's *English Essayists* (J M Dent and Sons). De lae, Bunyan, Swift and Fielding are not usually regarded as essayists but the range of the essay is unlimited and in order to make the selections varied in their interest and appeal, some pieces from these masters of prose have also been included.

## XIX

### The Convalescent

A pretty severe fit of indisposition which under the name of a nervous fever has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. I expect no healthy conclusions from me this month reader. I can offer you only sick men's dream.

And truly the whole state of sickness is such for what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a bed and draw daylight curtains about him and shutting out the sun to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it? To become insensible to all the operations of life except the beatings of one feeble pulse?

## LAMB

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick bed. How the patient lords it there; what caprices he acts without control! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering it, and thumping, and flatting, and moulding it, to the ever-varying requisitions of his throbbing temples

He changes *sides* oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his *Mare Clansum*.

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself' he is his own exclusive object. Supreme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'Tis the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly

## THE CONVALESCENT

concerned in the event of a law suit which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at once jogging this witness refreshing that solicitor. The cause was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision as if it were a question to be tried at Peking. Peradventure from some whispering going on about the house not intended for his hearing he picks up enough to make him understand that things went cross grained in the court yesterday and his friend is ruined. But the word friend and the word ruin disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of anything but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration!

He has put on the strong armour of sickness he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering he keeps his sympathy like some curious vintage under trusty lock and key for his own use only.

## LAMB

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself, he yearneth over himself, his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers: he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is for ever plotting how to do some good to himself, studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself: dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very skull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity and tender heart.

He is his own sympathizer: and instinctively feels that none can so well

## THE CONValescent

perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him that announces his broths and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it is unreservedly as to his bed post.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are. Only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing when the doctor makes his daily call and even in the lines on that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients but solely conceives of himself as *the sick man*. To what utter uneasy couch the good man is 'nastened' when he slips out of his chamber folding up his thin *douceur* so carefully for fear of rustling--is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumours touch him not. Some faint murmur indicative of life going

## LAMB

on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know anything, not to think of anything. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guesses at their errands. Exacter knowledge would be a burthen to him: he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking "Who was it?" He is flattered by a general notion that enquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the enquirer. In the general stillness and awful hush of the house he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty.

To be sick is to enjoy monarchal prerogatives. Compare the silent tread and quiet ministry, almost by the eye only, with which he is served—with the careless demeanour, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or leaving



## THE CONValesCENT

them open) of the very same attendants when he is getting a little better—and you will confess that from the bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow chair of convalescence is a fall from dignity amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature! Where is now the space which he occupied so lately in his own and the family's eye?

The scene of his regalties, his sick room—which was his presence chamber where he lay and acted his despotic functions—how is it reduced to a common bed room! The trimness of the very bed has something petty and unimposing about it. It is *made* every day. How unlike to that *way* many furrowed, oceanic surface which it presented so short a time since when to *make* it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three or four day revolutions when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness and decencies.

## LAMB

which his shaken frame deprecated ; than to be lifted into it again, for mother three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was an historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease ; and the shrunken skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid.

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The riddle of sickness is solved ; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he, too, changed with everything else ? Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of everything but physic—can this be he, who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy

## THE CONVALESCENT

from Nature erecting herself into a high meditating party — Pshaw tis some old woman

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous — the spell that hushed the household — the desert like stillness felt throughout its inmost chambers the mute attendance — the enquiry by looks the still softer delicacies of self attention the solemn single eye of discontent alone fixed upon itself world thoughts excluded — the man a world unto himself — his own theatre

What a speck is he dwindled into!

In this flat swamp of convalescence left by the ebb of sickness yet far enough from the terra firma of established health your note dear Editor reached me requesting — an article In Articulo Mortis thought I but it is something hard — and the quibble wretched as it was relieved me The summons unreasonable as it appeared seemed to link me on again to the petty businesses of life which I had lost sight of a gentle call to activity

## LAMB

however trivial. a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sickness—in which I confess to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines and monarchies of the world alike ; to its laws, and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding : the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself—are wasting to a span : and for the giant of self-importance, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant Essayist.

COWPER

*Treatment of His Hares*

IN the year 1774 being much indisposed both in mind and body incapable of diverting myself either with company or books and yet in a condition that made some diversion necessary I was glad of anything that would engage my attention without fatiguing it The children of a neighbour of mine had a leveret given them for a plaything it was at that time about three months old Understanding better how to treat the poor creature than to feed it and soon becoming weary of their charge they readily consented that their father who saw it prink and grow in, kinder every day should offer it to my acceptance I was willing enough to take the prisoner under my protection perceiving that in the management of

## COWPER

such an animal, and in the attempt to tame it. I should find just that sort of employment which my case required.

It was soon known among the neighbours that I was pleased with the present and the consequence was that in a short time I had as many leverets offered to me as would have stocked a paddock. I undertook the care of three, which it is necessary that I should here distinguish by the names I gave them—Puss, Tiney, and Bess. Notwithstanding the two feminine appellatives, I must inform you that they were all males. Immediately commencing carpenter, I built them houses to sleep in ; each had a separate apartment. In the daytime they had the range of a hall, and at night retired each to his own bed, never intruding into that of another.

Puss grew presently familiar, would leap into my lap, raise himself upon his hinder feet, and bite the hair from my temples. He would suffer me to take him up, and to carry him about in my arms, and has more than once fallen fast

## TREATMENT OF HIS HARDS

asleep upon my knee. He was ill three days during which time I nursed him kept him apart from his fellows that they might not molest him (for like many other wild animals they persecute one of their own species that is sick) and by constant care and trying him with a variety of herbs, restored him to perfect health. No creature could be more grateful than my patient after his recovery a sentiment which he most significantly expressed by licking my hand first the back of it then the palm then every finger separately, then between all the fingers as if anxious to leave no part of it unsaluted a ceremony which he never performed but once again upon a similar occasion.

Finding him extremely tractable I made it my custom to carry him always after breakfast into the garden where he hid himself generally under the leaves of a cucumber vine sleeping or chewing the cud till evening, in the leaves also of that vine he found a favourite repast.

## COWPER

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## TREATMENT OF HIS HALLS

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## COWPER

I had not long habituated him to this taste of liberty before he began to be impatient for the return of the time when he might enjoy it. He would invite me to the garden by drumming upon my knee, and by a look of such expression as it was not possible to misinterpret. If this rhetoric did not immediately succeed, he would take the skirt of my coat between his teeth, and pull it with all his force. Thus Puss might be said to be perfectly tamed, the shyness of his nature was done away, and on the whole it was visible, by many symptoms which I have not room to enumerate, that he was happier in human society than when shut up with his natural companions.

Not so Tiney ; upon him the kindest treatment had not the least effect. He too was sick, and in his sickness had an equal share of my attention ; but if, after his recovery, I took the liberty to stroke him, he would grunt, strike with his forefeet, spring forward, and bite. He was however, very entertaining in his way ;

## TREATMENT OF HIS HARES

even his surliness was matter of mirth and in his play he preserved such an air of gravity and performed his feats with such a solemnity of manner that in him too I had an agreeable companion

Bess who died soon after he was full grown and whose death was occasioned by his being turned into his box which had been washed while it was yet damp, was a hare of great humour and drollery. Puss was tamed by gentle usage. Timey was not to be tamed at all and Bess had a courage and confidence that made him tame from the beginning. I always admitted them into the parlour after supper when the carpet affording their feet a firm hold they would frisk and bound, and play a thousand gambols in which Bess being remarkably strong and fearless was always superior to the rest and proved himself the Vestris of the party. One evening the cat being in the room, had the hardiness to pat Bess upon the cheek an indignity which he resented by drumming upon her back with such vio-

## COWPER

lence that the cat was happy to escape from under his paws and hide herself.

I describe these animals as having each a character of his own. Such they were, in fact, and their countenances were so expressive of that character that, when I looked only on the face of either, I immediately knew which it was. It is said that a shepherd, however numerous his flock, soon becomes so familiar with their features that he can, by that indication only, distinguish each from all the rest ; and yet, to a common observer, the difference is hardly perceptible. Doubt not that the same discrimination in the cast of countenances would be discoverable in hares, and am persuaded that among a thousand of them no two could be found exactly similar—a circumstance little suspected by those who have not had opportunity to observe it.

These creatures have a singular sagacity in discovering the minutest alteration that is made in the place to which they are accustomed, and instantly apply their

## TREATMENT OF HIS HARFS

nose to the examination of a new object. A small hole being burnt in the carpet it was mended with a patch and that patch in a moment underwent the strictest scrutiny. They seem too to be very much directed by the smell in the choice of their favourites to some persons though they saw them daily they could never be reconciled and would even scream when they attempted to touch them but a miller coming in engaged their affections at once his powdered coat had charms that were irresistible.

It is no wonder that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the sportsman's amusement in abhorrence. He little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes of what gratitude they are capable how cheerful they are in their spirits what enjoyment they have of life and that unexpressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man it is only because man gives them peculiar cause for it.

That I may not be tedious I will just

## COWPER

give a short summary of those articles of diet that suit them best.

I take it to be a general opinion that they graze, but it is an erroneous one ; at least grass is not their staple. They seem rather to use it medicinally, soon quitting it for leaves of almost any kind. Sow thistle, dandelion, and lettuce are their favourite vegetables, especially the last. I discovered by accident that fine white sand is in great estimation with them—I suppose as a digestive. It happened that I was cleaning a bird-cage when the hares were with me. I placed a pot filled with such sand upon the floor, which, being at once directed to by a strong instinct, they devoured voraciously. Since that time I have generally taken care to see them well supplied with it.

They account green corn a delicacy, both blade and stalk, but the ear they seldom eat. Straw of any kind, especially wheat-straw, is another of their dainties. They will feed greedily upon oats, but, if furnished with clean straw,

## TREATMENT OF HIS HARES

never want them it serves them also for a bed and if shaken up daily will be kept sweet and dry for a considerable time. They do not indeed require aromatic herbs but will eat a small quantity of them with great relish and are particularly fond of the plant called musk.

They seem to resemble sheep in this that if their pasture be too succulent they are very subject to the rot to prevent which I always made bread their principal nourishment and filling a pan with it cut into small squares placed it every evening in their chambers—for they feed only at evening and in the night.

During the winter when vegetables were not to be got I mingled this mess of bread with shreds of carrot adding to it the rind of apples cut extremely thin for though they are fond of the paring the apple itself disgusts them. These however not being a sufficient substitute for the juice of summer herbs they must at this time be supplied with water.

## COWPER

but so placed that they cannot overset it into their beds. I must not omit that occasionally they are much pleased with twigs of hawthorn, and of the common brier, eating even the very wood when it is of considerable thickness.

Bess. I have said, died young. Tiney lived to be nine years old, and died at last. I have reason to think, of some hurt in his loins by a fall. Puss is still living, and has just completed his tenth year, discovering no signs of decay, nor even of age, except that he is grown more discreet and less frolicsome than he was. I cannot conclude without observing that I have lately introduced a dog to his acquaintance—a spaniel that had never seen a hare, to a hare that had never seen a spaniel. I did it with great caution, but there was no real need of it. Puss discovered no token of fear, nor Marquis the least symptom of hostility. There is, therefore, it should seem, no natural antipathy between dog and hare : but the pursuit of the one occasions the flight of the other.



## TREATMENT OF HIS HARES

and the dog pursues because he is trained to it. They eat bread at the same time out of the same hand and are in all respects sociable and friendly.

## On Going a Journey

ONE of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey but I like to go by myself I can enjoy society in a room but out of doors nature is company enough for me I am then never less alone than when alone

\* The field's his study nature was his book

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country I am not for criticising hedge rows and black cattle I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it There are those who for this purpose go to watering places and carry the metropolis with them I like more elbow room and fewer encumbrances I like

## HAZLITT

solitude. when I give myself up to it. for  
the sake of solitude nor do I ask for

a friend in my retreat  
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect  
liberty, to think, feel, do just as one  
pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be  
free of all impediments and of all incon-  
veniences : to leave ourselves behind,  
much more to get rid of others. It is be-  
cause I want a little breathing-space to  
muse on indifferent matters, where  
Contemplation

' May plume her feathers and let grow  
her wings,  
That in the various bustle of re-sort  
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd."

that I absent myself from the town for  
awhile, without feeling at a loss the  
moment I am left by myself. Instead of a  
friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury,  
to exchange good things with, and vary  
the same stale topics over again, for once  
let me have a truce with impertinence.

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

Give me the clear blue sky over my head  
and the green turf beneath my feet  
a winding road before me and a three hours  
march to dinner—and then to thinking.  
It is hard if I cannot start some game on  
these lone heaths I laugh I run I  
leap I sing for joy From the point of  
yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my  
past being and revel there as the sun  
burnt Indian plunges headlong into the  
wave that wafts him to his native shore  
Then long forgotten things like sunken  
wrack and gumless treasures' burst upon  
my eager sight and I begin to feel, think  
and be myself again Instead of an awk-  
ward silence broken by attempts at wit  
or dull common places mine is that un-  
disturbed silence of the heart which alone  
is perfect eloquence No one likes pause  
alliterations, antitheses argument and  
analysis better than I do but I some-  
times had rather be without them

Leave oh leave me to my repose ' I  
have just now other business in hand  
which would seem idle to you but is

## HAZLITT

with me "very stuff of the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-frost fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

Mr Cobbett - that he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time. So I cannot talk and think or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. Let me have a

companion of my way says Sterne were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines. It is beautifully said but in my opinion this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show it is inspired if you have to explain it it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to fix in a stock of ideas then and to examine and anatomize them

## HAZLITT

afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briers and thorns of controversy. For once I like to have it all my own way and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find necessary to defend them

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish and sometimes still fondly clutch them when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company seems extravagance or affectation and on the other hand to have to unravel this mystery of our being every turn and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must give it an understanding but no tongue. My old friend Coleridge however could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale a summer's day and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. He talked far above singing. If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words I might perhaps wish



## HAZLITT

to have someone with me to admire the swelling theme, or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had", and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following. —

Here be woods a green  
As any air likewise as fresh and sweet  
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet  
Face of the curled stream, with flows as  
many  
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any:  
Here be all new delights, cool streams and  
wells  
Arbours O'ergrown with woodbine caves and  
dells;  
Choose where thou wilt, while I sit by and  
sing,  
Or gather rushes to make many a ring  
For thy long fingers, tell thee tales of love,  
How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,  
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes  
She took eternal fire that never dîes,  
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

His temples bound with poppy to the steep  
Head of old Latmos where she stops each  
night

Climbing the mountain with her brother's light  
To kiss her sweetest

— *From thy Shepherdess*

Had I words and images at command like these I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds but at the sight of nature my fancy poor as it is droops and closes up its leaves like flowers at sunset I can make nothing out at the spot I must have time to collect myself

In general good things spoils out of door prospect, it should be reserved for Table talk Lamb is for this reason I take it the worst company in the world out-of-doors because he is the best within I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey and that is what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation by setting a keener edge on

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appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then, after enquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn." These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

"The cups that cheer but not inebriate,"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent

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veal cutlet ' Sancho in such a situation once fixed upon cow heel and his choice though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged Then in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul O procul estis profani* ' These hours are sacred to silence and to musing to be treasured up in the memory and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter I would not waste them in idle talk or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn If he is a Quaker or from the West Riding of Yorkshire so much the better I do not even try to sympathize with him and he breaks no squares I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events In his ignorance of me and my affairs I in a manner forget myself But a friend re-

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muds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits: or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world, but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"Lord of one's self, unnumber'd with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt.

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to be known by no other title than *the Gentler an in the parlour* ! One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture and from being so to others begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common places that we appear in the world. an inn restores us to the level of nature and quits scores with society ! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—some times when I have been left entirely to myself and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem as once at Witham-common where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas— at other times when there have been pictures in the room as at St Neots (I think it was) where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little

inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention. Luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, and which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my

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birthday and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Illogan turns off between Chirk and Wrexham and on passing a certain point you come all at once upon the valley which opens like an amphitheatre broad barren hills rising in majestic state on either side with 'green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks below and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in midst of them. The valley at this time glittered green with sunny showers and a budding ash tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight a heavenly vision on which were written in letters large as Hope could make them these four words, LIBERTY GENIUS LOVE,



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VINTAGE : which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

‘ The beautiful is vanished and returns not.’

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot ; but I would return to it alone . What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced ! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named . Where is he now ? Not only I myself have changed ; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dec. in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert ; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely !

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There is hardly anything that shows the short sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas nay our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long forgotten scenes and then the picture of the mind revives again but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent and if we paint one set of objects upon it they immediately efface every other. We can not enlarge our conceptions we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye we take our fill of it and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on and think no more of it the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country I can form no idea of a wood; and cultivated one. It appears to

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to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world, in our conceit of it, is not much bigger than a nut-shell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, country joined to country, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast; the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China, to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even com-

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prehend the texture of our own being only piece-meal in this way however we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations everyone must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot from the mere anticipation of the actual impression we remember circumstances feelings persons faces names that we had not thought of for years but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten.—To return to the question I have quitted above

I have no objection to go to see ruins aqueducts pictures in company with a

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friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion, antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place", nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *eclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

"With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd"  
descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite

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superseded the powdered Cicero that attended us and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures -- As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases this relief which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen. There must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech and I own that the pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas one seems a

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species by one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellow-ship and support.— Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones; I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!— There is undoubtedly a sensation in travel-

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ling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else but it is more pleasant at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference and, like a dream or another state of existence does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly we must 'jump' all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive but it appears to be cut out of our substantial downright existence and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We



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are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends.  
So the poet somewhat grandly sings :

“ Out of my country and myself I go ”

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them ; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home :

## On Reading Old Books

I hate to read new books. There are twenty or thirty volumes that I have read over and over again and these are the only ones that I have any desire ever to read at all. It was a long time before I could bring myself to sit down to the *Tales of my Landlord* but now that author's works have made a considerable addition to my scanty library. I am told that some of Lady Morgan's are good and have been recommended to look into *Anastasis* but I have not yet ventured upon that task. A lady the other day could not refrain from expressing her surprise to a friend, who said he had been reading *Delphine* she asked — If it had not been published some time back? Women judge of books as they do of fashions or complexions which are admired only "in their

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newest gloss." That is not my way. I am not one of those who trouble the circulating libraries much, or pester the booksellers for mail-coach copies of standard periodical publications. I cannot say that I am greatly addicted to black letter, but I profess myself well versed in the marble bindings of *Andrew Millar*, in the middle of the last century; nor does my taste revolt at *Thurloe's State Papers*, in Russia leather; or an ample impression of *Sir William Temple's Essays*, with a portrait after Sir Godfrey Kneller in front. I do not think altogether the worse of a book for having survived the author a generation or two. I have more confidence in the dead than the living. Contemporary writers may generally be divided into two classes—one's friends or one's foes. Of the first we are compelled to think too well, and of the last we are disposed to think too ill to receive much genuine pleasure from the perusal, or to judge fairly of the merits of either. One candidate for literary fame, who happens

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to be of our acquaintance writes finely and like a man of genius, but unfortunately has a foolish free which spoils a delicate passage — another inspires us with the highest respect for his personal talents and character but does not quite come up to our expectations in print. All these contractions and petty details interrupt the calm current of our reflections. If you want to know what any of the authors were who lived before our time and are still objects of anxious enquiry you have only to look into their works. But the dust and smoke and noise of modern literature have nothing in common with the pure silent air of immortality.

When I take up a work that I have read before (the oftener the better) I know what I have to expect. The satisfaction is not lessened by being anticipated. When the entertainment is altogether new I sit down to it as I should to a strange dish — turn and pick out a little here and there and am in doubt what to think of the composition. There is a want of

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confidence and security to second appetite. New-fangled books are also like made-dishes in this respect, that they are generally little else than dashes and *refraiment* of what has been served up entire and in a more natural state at other times. Besides, in this turning to a well-known author, there is not only an assurance that my time will not be thrown away, or my palate nauseated with the most insipid or vilest trash,—but I shake hands with, and look an old, tired, and valued friend in the face.—compare notes, and chat the hours away. It is true, we form dear friendships with such ideal guests—dearer, alas! and more lasting, than those with our most intimate acquaintance. In reading a book which is an old favourite with me (say the first novel I ever read) I not only have the pleasure of imagination and of a critical relish of the work but the pleasures of memory added to it. It recalls the same feelings and associations which I had in first reading it, and which I can never have again in any other way.

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Standard productions of this kind are links in the chain of our conscious being. They bind together the different scattered divisions of our personal identity. They are landmarks and guides in our journey through life. They are pegs and loops on which we can hang up or from which we can take down at pleasure the wardrobe of a moral imagination: the relics of our best affections: the tokens and records of our happiest hours. They are 'for thoughts and for remembrance.' They are like Fortunatus's Wishing Cup—they give us the best riches—those of Fancy—and transport us not over half the globe—but (which is better) over half our lives at a word's notice.

Mr father Shandy solaced himself with *Bruscamille*. Give me for this purpose a volume of *Peregrine Pickle* or *Tom Jones*. Open either of them anywhere—at the memoirs of Lady Vane or the adventures at the masquerade with Lady Bellaston or the disputes between Thwackum and Square or the escape of Molly Seagrim or the incident of Sophia and her muff or the

edifying prolixity of her aunt's lecture—and there I find the same delightful, busy, bustling scene as ever, and feel myself the same as when I was first introduced into the midst of it. Nay, sometimes the sight of an odd volume of these good old English authors on a stall, or the name lettered on the back among others on the shelves of a library, answers the purpose, revives the whole train of ideas, and sets "the puppets dallying." Twenty years are struck off the list, and I am a child again. A sage philosopher (Godwin), who was not a very wise man, said, that he should like very well to be young again, if he could take his experience with him. This ingenious person did not seem to be aware, by the gravity of his remark, that the great advantage of being young is to be without this weight of experience, which he would fain place upon the shoulders of youth, and which never comes too late with years. Oh! what a privilege to be able to let this hump, like Christian's burthen, drop from off one's

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back and transport one's self by the help of a little musty duodecimo to the time when ignorance was bliss and when we first got a peep at the ruse-show of the world, through the glass of fiction—gazing at mankind as we do at wild beasts in a menagerie through the bars of their cages—or at curiosities in a museum that we must not touch! For myself, not only are the old ideas of the contents of the work brought back to my mind in all their vividness but the old associations of the faces and persons of those I then knew, as they were in their lifetime—the place where I sat to read the volume—the day when I got it—the feeling of the air—the fields—the sky—return and all my early impressions with them. This is better to me—those places, those times—those persons and those feelings that come across me as I retrace the story and devour the page—are to me better far than the wet sheets of the last new novel from the Ballantyne Press to say nothing of the Minerva Press in Leadenhall Street.



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It is like visiting the scenes of early youth. I think of the time "when I was in my father's house, and my path ran down with butter and honey,"—when I was a little, thoughtless child, and had no other wish or care but to con my daily task, and be happy.—*Tom Jones*, I remember, was the first work that broke the spell. It came down in numbers once a fortnight, in Cooke's pocket edition, embellished with cuts. I had hitherto read only in school-books, and a tiresome ecclesiastical history (with the exception of Mrs. Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest*), but this had a different relish with it,— "sweet in the mouth," though not "bitter in the belly." It smacked of the world I lived in, and in which I was to live—and showed me groups, "gay creatures" "not of the element", but of the earth: not "living in the clouds", but travelling the same road that I did; some that had passed on before me, and others that might soon overtake me. My heart had palpitated at the thoughts of a boarding-

school ball or gala day at Midsummer or Christmas but the world I had found out in Cooke's edition of the British Novelists was to me a dance through life a perpetual gala day The sixpenny numbers of this work regularly contrived to leave off just in the middle of a sentence, and in the nick of a story where Tom Jones discovers Square behind the blanket or where Parson Adams in the inextricable confusion of events very undesignedly gets to bed to Mrs. Slipshod Let me caution the reader against this impression of *Joseph Andrews* for there is a picture of Lanny in it which he should not set his heart on lest he should never meet with anything like it or if he should it would perhaps be better for him that he had not It was just like—' With what eagerness I used to look forward to the next number and open the prints ' Ah ' never again shall I feel the enthusiastic delight with which I gazed at the figures and anticipated the stories and adventures of Major Rath and Commodore Truncheon of Trun-

and my Uncle Toby of Don Quixote and Sancho and Dapple, of Gil Blas and Dame Lorenza Sephora, of Laura and the fair Lucretia, whose lips open and shut like buds of roses. To what nameless ideas did they give rise, with what airy delights I filled up the outlines, as I hung in silence over the page!—Let me still recall them, that they may breathe fresh life into me, and that I may live that birthday of thought and romantic pleasure over again! Talk of the *ideal*! This is the only true ideal—the heavenly tints of Fancy reflected in the bubbles that float upon the springtide of human life.

Oh ' Memory ' shield me from the world's  
poor strife

And give those scents that everlasting  
life.

The paradox with which I set out is, I hope, less startling than it was; the reader will, by this time, have been let into my secret. Much about the same time, or I believe rather earlier, I took a particular satisfaction in reading Chubb's

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Tracts and I often think I will get them again to wade through. There is a high gusto of polemical divinity in them and you fancy that you hear a club of shoemakers at Salisbury debating a disputable text from one of St Paul's Epistles in a workmanlike style with equal shrewdness and pertinacity. I cannot say much for my metaphysical studies into which I plunged shortly after with great ardour so as to make a toil of a pleasure. I was presently entangled in briars and thorns of subtle distinctions — of free will foreknowledge absolute though I cannot add that in their wandering mazes I found no end ' for I did arrive at some very satisfactory and potent conclusions nor will I go so far however ungrateful the subject might seem as to exclaim with Marlowe's Faustus. Would I had never seen Wittenburg, never read book — that is, never studied such authors as Hartley Hume Berkeley etc. Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* is however a work from

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which I never derived either pleasure or profit, and Hobbes, dry and powerful as he is, I did not read till long afterwards. I read a few poets which did not much hit my taste,—for I would have the reader understand, I am deficient in the faculty of imagination, but I fell early upon French romances and philosophy, and devoured them tooth-and-nail. Many a dainty repast have I made of the *Neu Eloise*:—the description of the kiss; the excursion on the water; the letter of St. Preux, recalling the time of their first loves, and the account of Julia's death; these I read over and over again with unspeakable delight and wonder. Some years after, when I met with this work again, I found I had lost nearly my whole relish for it (except some few parts), and was, I remember, very much mortified with the change in my taste, which I sought to attribute to the smallness and gilt edges of the edition I had bought, and its being perfumed with rose-leaves. Nothing could exceed the gravity, the

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solemnity with which I carried home and read the *Dedication of the Social Contract*, with some other pieces of the same author which I picked up at a stall in a coarse leathern cover. Of the *Confessions* I have spoken elsewhere and may repeat what I have said. 'Sweet is the dew of their memory and pleasant the balm of their recollection.' Their beauties are not scattered like stray gifts over the earth 'but sown thick on the page rich and rare. I wish I had never read the *Familiar*, or read it with less implicit faith. I had no occasion to pamper my natural aversion to affectation or pretence by romantic and artificial means. I had better have formed myself on the model of Sir Fopling Flatter. There is a class of persons whose virtues and most shining qualities sink in, and are concealed by, an absorbent ground of modesty and reserve and such a one I do without vanity, profess myself. Now these are the very persons who are likely to attach themselves to the character of *Familiars*

and of whom it is sure to be the bane. This dull, phlegmatic, retiring humour is not in a fair way to be corrected, but confirmed and rendered desperate, by being in that work held up as an object of imitation, as an example of simplicity and magnanimity - by coming upon us with all the recommendations of novelty, surprise, and superiority to the prejudices of the world - by being stuck upon a pedestal, made amiable, dazzling, a *leurre de dupe*. The reliance on solid worth which it inculcates, the preference of sober truth to gaudy tinsel, hangs like a mill-stone round the neck of imagination - "a load to sink a navy" - impedes our progress, and blocks up every prospect in life. A man, to get on, to be successful, conspicuous, plauded, should not retire upon the centre of his conscious resources, but be always at the circumference of appearances. He must envelop himself in a halo of mystery—he must walk with a train of self-conceit following him—he must not strip himself to a buff-jerkin.

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to the doublet and hose of his real merits but must surround himself with a *cortège* of prejudices like the signs of *Zodiac*—he must seem anything but what he is and then he may pass for anything he pleases. The world loves to be amused by hollow professions to be deceived by flattering appearances to live in a state of hallucination, and can forgive everything but the plain downright simple honest truth—such as we see it chalked out in the character of *Pinch*. — To return from this digression which is a little out of place here.

Books have in a great measure lost their power over me—nor can I revive the same interest in them as formerly. I perceive when a thing is good rather than feel it. It is true

*Marcus Ciceron* is a dainty book

and the reading of Mr Keats's *Life of Saint Ignace* lately made me regret that I was not young again. The beautiful and tender images there conjured up—come like shadows—so depart. The tiger



moth's wings,' which he has spread over his rich poetic blazonry, just flit across my fancy; the gorgeous twilight window which he has painted over again in his verse, to me "blushes" almost in vain 'with blood of queens and kings.' I know how I should have felt at one time in reading such passages: and that is all. The sharp luscious flavour, the fine *aroma*, is fled, and nothing but the stalk, the bran, the husk of literature is left. If anyone were to ask me what I read now, I might answer with my Lord Hamlet in the play:

'Words words, words —

'What is the matter' — Nothing "

They have scarce a meaning. But it was not always so. There was a time when, to my thinking, every word was a flower or a pearl, like those which dropped from the mouth of the little peasant-girl in the fairy tale, or like those that fall from the great preacher in the Caledonian Chapel: I drank of the stream of knowledge that tempted, but

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did not mock my lips as of the river of  
life freely. How eagerly I slaked my  
thirst of German sentiment as the hart  
that panteth for the water springs how  
I bathed and revelled and added my  
floods of tear to Goethe's *Sorrows of Wer-  
ter* and to Schiller's *Robbers*—

Giving my stock of more to that  
which had too much

I read and asented with all my soul  
to Coleridge's fine sonnet beginning—

Schiller that hour I would have wished to die  
If through the shuddering midnight I had sent  
From the dark dungeon of the tower time rent  
That fearful voice a famished father's cry

I believe I may date my insight into  
the mysteries of poetry from the com-  
mencement of my acquaintance with the  
authors of the *Lyrical Ballads* at least my  
discrimination of the higher sorts—not my  
predilection for such writers as Gold-  
smith or Pope nor do I imagine they will  
say I got my liking for the Novelists or  
the comic writers—for the character of

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Valentine, Tattle, or Miss Prue, from them. If so, I must have got from them what they never had themselves. In points where poetic diction and conception are concerned, I may be at a loss, liable to be imposed upon, but in forming an estimate of passages relating to common life and manners, I cannot think I am a plagiarist from any man. I there "know my cue without a prompter." I may say of such studies; *Intus et in cute*. I am just able to admire those literal touches of observation and description, which persons of loftier pretensions overlook and despise. I think I comprehend something of the characteristic part of Shakespeare; and in him, indeed, all is characteristic, even the nonsense and poetry. I believe it was the celebrated Sir Humphry Davy who used to say that Shakespeare was rather a metaphysician than a poet. At any rate it was not ill said. I wish that I had sooner known the dramatic writers contemporary with Shakespeare: for, in looking them over about a year ago, I almost revived my

## ON READING OLD BOOKS

old passion for reading and my delight in old books though they were very nearly new to me. The Periodical Essayists I read long ago. The *Spectator* I liked extremely but the *Tatler* took my fancy most. I read the others soon after—the *Hambler* the *Adventurer* the *World* the *Connoisseur*. I was not sorry to get to the end of them and have no desire to go regularly through them again. I consider myself a thorough adept in Richardson. I like the longest of his novels best and think no part of them tedious nor should I ask to have anything better to do than to read them from beginning to end to take them up when I choose and lay them down when I was tired in some old family mansion in the country till every word and syllable relating to the bright *Clarissa* the divine *Clementina* the beautiful *Pamela* with every trick and line of their sweet favour were once more graven in my heart's table. I have a sneaking kindness for Mackenzie's *Julia de Louvoigné*—for the deserted mansion and

straggling gilliflowers on the mouldering garden-wall ; and still more for his *Man of Feeling* , not that it is better, nor so good ; but at the time I read it I sometimes thought of the heroine, Miss Walton, and of Miss Ralton together, and " that ligament, fine as it was, was never broken " — One of the poets that I have always read with most pleasure, and can wander about in for ever with a sort of voluptuous indolence, is Spenser : and I like Chaucer even better. The only writer among the Italians I can pretend to any knowledge of is Boccaccio, and of him I cannot express half my admiration. His story of the Hawk I could read and think of from day to day, just as I would look at a picture of Titian's !

I remember, as long ago as the year 1798, going to a neighbouring town (Shrewsbury, where Farquhar has laid the plot of his *Recruiting Officer*) and bringing home with me, ' at one proud swoop ' a copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and another of Burke's *Reflections on the French*

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*Revolution*—both which I have still and still recollect when I see the covers the pleasure with which I dipped into them as I returned with my double prize I was set up for one while That time is past with all its gaily raptures but I am still anxious to preserve its memory

embalmed with odours With respect to the first of the works I will be permitted to remark here in passing that it is a sufficient answer to the German criticism which has since been started against the character of *Satan* (that it is not one of disgusting deformity or purloined malice) to say that Milton has there drawn not the abstract principle of evil not a devil incarnate but a fallen angel This is the scriptural account and the poet has followed it We may safely return such passages as that well known one

He (ruled) not yet lost  
 All her regal bright or appear  
 Le with arch angel round the exalted  
 Of glory about I —

## HAZLITT

for the theory, which is opposed to them, "falls flat upon the grunsel edge, and shames its worshippers." Let us hear no more then of this monkish cant, and bigoted outcry for the restoration of the horns and tail of the devil—Again, as to the other work, Burke's *Reflections*. I took a particular pride and pleasure in it, and read it to myself and others for months afterwards. I had reason for my prejudice in favour of this author. To understand an adversary is some praise: to admire him is more. I thought I did both: I knew I did one. From the first time I ever cast my eyes on anything of Burke's (which was an extract from his letter to a Noble Lord in a three-times-a-week paper, *The St. James's Chronicle*, in 1796), I said to myself: "This is true eloquence, this is a man pouring out his mind on paper." All other style seemed to me pedantic and impertinent. Dr. Johnson's was walking on stilts; and even Junius's (who was at that time a favourite with me), with all his terseness, shrank

## ON READING OLD BOOKS

up into little antithetic points and well trimmed sentences. But Burke's style was forked and playful as the lightning crested like the serpent. He delivered plain things on a plain ground—but when he rose there was no end of his flights and circumgyrations—and in this very Letter—he like an eagle in a dove cot flattered his Volscians (the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale) in Corioh—I did not care for his doctrine—I was then, and am still, proof against their contagion—but I admired the author and was considered as not a very staunch partisan of the opposite side though I thought myself that an abstract proposition was one thing—a masterly transition a brilliant metaphor—another—I conceived, too that he might be wrong in his main argument and yet deliver fifty truths in arriving at a false conclusion—I remember Coleridge warning me as a poetical and political set off to my sceptical admiration that Wordsworth had written in Essay on Marriage which for manly thought and nervous



expression, he deemed incomparably superior. As I had not, at that time, seen any specimens of Mr Wordsworth's prose style, I could not express my doubts on the subject. If there are greater prose-writers than Burke, they either lie out of my course of study or are beyond my sphere of comprehension. I am too old to be a convert to a new mythology of genius. The niches are occupied, the tables are full. If such is still my admiration of this man's misapplied powers, what must it have been at a time when I myself was in vain trying, year after year, to write a single Essay, nay, a single page or sentence; when I regarded the wonders of his pen with the longing eyes of one who was dumb and a changeling; and when to be able to convey the slightest conception of my meaning to others, in words, was the height of an almost hopeless ambition? But I never measured others' excellences by my own defects: though a sense of my own incapacity, and of the steep, impass-

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able ascent from me to them, made me regard them with greater awe and fondness. I have thus run through most of my early studies and favourite authors some of whom I have since criticized more at large. Whether those observations will survive me I neither know nor do I much care but to the works themselves

worthy of all acceptance and to the feelings they have always excited in me since I could distinguish a meaning in language nothing shall ever prevent me from looking back with gratitude and triumph. To have lived in the cultivation of an intimacy with such works and to have familiarly relished such names is not to have lived quite in vain.

There are other authors whom I have never read and yet whom I have frequently had a great desire to read from some circumstance relating to them. Among these is Lord Clarendon's *History of the Grand Rebellion*, after which I have a hankering from hearing it spoken of by good judges, from my interest in the events

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and knowledge of the characters from other sources, and from having seen fine portraits of most of them. I like to read a well-penned character, and Clarendon is said to have been a master in this way. I should like to read Froissart's *Chronicles*, Holinshed and Stowe, and Fuller's *Worthies*. I intend, whenever I can, to read Beaumont and Fletcher all through. There are fifty-two of their plays, and I have only read a dozen or fourteen of them. *A Wife for a Month*, and *Thierry and Theodoret*, are, I am told, delicious, and I can believe it. I should like to read the speeches in *Thucydides*, and Guicciardini's *History of Florence* and *Don Quixote* in the original. I have often thought of reading the *Loves of Persiles and Sigismunda* and the *Galatea* of the same author. But I somehow reserve them like "another Yarrow." I should also like to read the last new novel (if I could be sure it was so) of the author of *Waverley* :—no one would be more glad than I to find it the best !

## VIII

LEIGH HUNT

### *A Few Thoughts on Sleep*

THIS is an article for the reader to think of when he or she is warm in bed a little before he goes to sleep the clothes at his ear, and the wind moaning in some distant crevice

Blessings exclaimed Sancho on him that first invented sleep It wraps a man all round like a cloak It is a delicious moment certainly—that of being well nestled in bed and feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep The good is to come not past the limbs have been just tired enough to render the remainder in one posture delightful the labour of the day is done A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one — the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more with slow and hushing degrees like a mother detaching

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her hand from that of her sleeping child :— the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye :— 'tis closing :— 'tis more closing — 'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.

It is said that sleep is best before midnight and Nature herself, with her darkness and chilling dews, informs us so. There is another reason for going to bed betimes : for it is universally acknowledged that lying late in the morning is a great shortener of life. At least, it is never found in company with longevity. It also tends to make people corpulent. But these matters belong rather to the subject of early rising than of sleep.

Sleep at a late hour in the morning is not half so pleasant as the more timely one. It is sometimes, however, excusable, especially to a watchful or overworked head, neither can we deny the seducing merits of 't'other doze',—the pleasing wilfulness of nestling in a new posture, when you know you ought to be up, like the rest of the house. But then you cut

## A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

up the day and you sleep the next night

In the course of the day few people think of sleeping, except after dinner and then it is often rather a hovering and nodding on the borders of sleep than sleep itself. This is a privilege allowable we think to none but the old or the sickly or the very tired and care worn and it should be well understood before it is exercised in company. To escape into slumber from an argument or to take it as an affair of course only between you and your binary duct or to assent with involuntary nods to all that you have just been disputing is not so well much less to sit nodding and tottering beside a lady or to be in danger of drooping your head into the front plate or your host's face or of waking up and saying just so to the bark of a dog or yes madam to the bluck at your elbow.

Care worn people however might refresh themselves oftener with day sleep than they do if their bodily state is such

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as to dispose them to it. It is a mistake to suppose that all care is wakeful. People sometimes sleep, as well as wake, by reason of their sorrow. The difference seems to depend upon the nature of their temperament : though in the *most* excessive cases, sleep is perhaps Nature's never-failing relief, as swooning is upon the rack. A person with jaundice in his blood shall lie down and go to sleep at noonday, when another of a different complexion shall find his eyes as uncloseable as a statue's, though he has had no sleep for nights together. Without meaning to lessen the dignity of suffering, which has quite enough to do with its waking hours, it is this that may often account for the profound sleeps enjoyed the night before hazardous battles, executions, and other demands upon an over-excited spirit.

The most complete and healthy sleep that can be taken in the day is in summer-time, out in a field. There is, perhaps, no solitary sensation so exquisite as that of slumbering on the grass or hay, shaded

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from the hot sun by a tree with the consciousness of a fresh but light air running through the wide atmosphere and the sky stretching far overhead upon all sides. Earth and heaven and a placid humanity seem to have the creation to themselves. There is nothing between the slumberer and the naked and glad innocence of nature.

Next to this but at a long interval the most relishing snatch of slumber out of bed is the one which a tired person takes before he retires for the night while lingering in his sitting room. The consciousness of being very sleepy and of having the power to go to bed immediately gives great zest to the unwillingness to move. Sometimes he sits nodding in his chair but the sudden and leaden jerks of the head to which a state of great sleepiness renders him liable, are generally too painful for so luxurious a moment and he gets into a more legitimate posture sitting sideways with his head on the chair back or



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throwing his legs up at once on another chair, and half reclining. It is curious, however, to find how long an inconvenient posture will be borne for the sake of this foretaste of repose. The worst of it is, that on going to bed the charm sometimes vanishes: perhaps from the colder temperature of the chamber, for a fireside is a great opiate.

Speaking of the painful positions into which a sleepy loungee will get himself, it is amusing to think of the more fantastic attitudes that so often take place in bed. If we could add anything to the numberless things that have been said about sleep by the poets, it would be upon this point. Sleep never shows himself a greater leveller. A man in his waking moments may look as proud and self-possessed as he pleases. He may walk proudly, he may sit proudly, he may eat his dinner proudly: he may shave himself with an air of infinite superiority: in a word, he may show himself grand and absurd upon the most trifling occa-

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sions But sleep plays the petrifying magician He arrests the proudest lord as well as the humblest clown in the most ridiculous postures so that if you could draw a grandee from his bed without waking him no limb twisting fool in a pantomime should create wilder laughter The toy with the string between its legs is hardly a posture master more extravagant Imagine a despot lifted up to the gaze of his valets with his eyes shut his mouth open his left hand under his right ear his other twisted and hanging helplessly before him like an idiot's, one knee lifted up and the other leg stretched out or both knees huddled up together — what a scarecrow to lodge majestic power in

But sleep is kindly even in his tricks and the poets have treated him with proper reverence According to the ancient mythologists he had even one of the Graces to wife He had a thousand sons of whom the chief were Morpheus or the Shaper Icelos, or the Likely Phantasus

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the Fancy, and Phobos, the Terror. His dwelling some writers place in a dull and darkling part of the earth; others, with greater compliment, in heaven; and others, with another kind of propriety, by the seashore. There is a good description of it in Ovid, but in these abstracted tasks of poetry the moderns outvie the ancients, and there is nobody who has built his bower for him so finely as Spenser. Archimago, in the first book of the *Fairy Queene* (canto 1. st. 29), sends a little spirit down to Morpheus to fetch him a Dream.

He making speedy way through sperred  
    wre

And through the world of waters, wide  
    and deepe,

To Morpheus' house doth hastily repaire  
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe  
And loe where dawning day doth never  
    peepe,

His dwelling is. There, Tethys his wel  
    bed

Doth ever wash and Cynthia still doth  
    steepe

In silver dew his ever-drooping head,

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Whiles sad night over him her mantle  
black doth pread  
And more to lull him in his slumber soft  
A trickling streame from high rocks  
tumbling downe  
And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft  
Mixed with a murmuring winde much  
like the wowe  
Of swarming bees did set him in a  
swoone  
No other noise nor peoples troublous  
cries  
As still are wont to waken the wall  
towe  
Might there be heard but ceaseles Quiet  
lies  
Wrapt in eternall silence far from  
enuyes

Chancer has drawn the cave of the  
same god with greater simplicity but  
nothing can have a more deep and sullen  
effect than his chiffe and cold running  
waters It seems as real as an actual  
solinde or some quaint old picture in a  
book of travels in Tartary He is telling  
the story of Cery and Aleyone in the  
poem called his Dream Juno tells a  
messenger to go to Morpheus and bid

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him creep into the body' of the drowned king, to let his wife know the fatal event by his apparition

This messenger took leave and went  
 Unto his way and never he stent  
 Till he came to the dark valley,  
 That stood between the rocks-twey  
 There never yet grew corn, he said,  
 No tree he thought that aught was  
 But he may see naught else ;  
 Save that there were a few wells  
 Came running from the cliffs above,  
 That made a deadly sleeping sound  
 And runnen downe right by a cave,  
 That was under a rocky grave.  
 Amid the valley wonder-deepe,  
 There these goddis lay asleepe,  
 Morphens and Eclympasteir  
 That was the god of Sleeps-heire  
 That slept and did none other worke.

Where the credentials of this new son and heir, Eclympasteir, are to be found, we know not ; but he acts very much, it must be allowed, like an heir presumptive, in sleeping and doing 'none other work.'

We dare not trust ourselves with many quotations upon sleep from the poets :

## A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

they are so numerous as well as beautiful. We must content ourselves with mentioning that our two most favourite passages are one in the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles admirable for its contrast to a scene of a terrible agony which it closes and the other the following address in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy of *Valentinian* the hero of which is also a sufferer under bodily torment. He is in a chair slumbering and these most exquisite lines are gently sung with music. —

Care-charming sleep thou easer of all  
woes

Brother to Death sweetly thyself dispose  
On this afflicted prince Fall like a cloud  
In gentle showers give nothing that is  
loud

Or if unful to his slumbers easy sweet  
And as a purling stream, thou son of night  
Pass by his troubled senses sing his pain  
Like hollow murmuring wind or silver  
rain

Into this prince gently oh gently slide  
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride

How earnest and prayer like are these  
ruses! How lightly sprinkled and yet

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how deeply setting, like rain, the fancy '  
How quiet, affectionate, and perfect the  
conclusion !

Sleep is most graceful in an infant ;  
soundest, in one who has been tired in  
the open air ; completest, to the seaman  
after a hard voyage , most welcome, to  
the mind haunted with one idea ; most  
touching to look at, in the parent that  
has wept ; lightest, in the playful child ;  
proudest, in the bride adored

VVV

SCOTT

## Oliver Goldsmith

OLIVER Goldsmith was born on the 29th November 1728 at Pallis (or rather Palace) in the parish of Fintas and county of Longford in Ireland where his father the Rev Charles Goldsmith a minister of the Church of England at that time resided This worthy clergyman whose virtues his celebrated son afterwards rendered immortal in the character of the Village Priest, had a family of seven children for whom he was enabled to provide but very indifferently He obtained ultimately a benefice in the county of Roscommon but died early, for the careful researches of the Rev John Graham of Lifford have found his widow *nona vixite senescentes* reading with her



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son Oliver in Ballymahon, so early as 1740. Among the shop accounts of a petty grocer of the place, Mrs. Goldsmith's name occurs frequently as a customer for trifling articles—on which occasions Master Noll appears to have been his mother's usual emissary. He was recollected, however, in the neighbourhood, by more poetical employments, as that of playing on the flute, and wandering in solitude on the shores, or among the islands of the river Inny, which is remarkably beautiful at Ballymahon.

Oliver early distinguished himself by the display of lively talents, as well as by that uncertainty of humour which is so often attached to genius, as the slave in the chariot of the Roman triumph. An uncle by affinity, the Rev Thomas Contarine, undertook the expense of affording to so promising a youth the advantages of a scholastic education. He was put to school at Edgeworth's-town and, in June, 1744, was sent to Dublin College as a sizar; a situation which

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subjected him to much discouragement and ill usage, especially as he had the misfortune to fall under the charge of a brutal tutor.

On 10th June 1747 Goldsmith obtained his only academical honor being an exhibition on the foundation of Erasmus Smythe, Esq. Some indiscreet frolic induced him soon afterwards to quit the University for a period and he appears thus early to have commenced that sort of idle strolling life which has often great charms for youths of genius because it frees them from every species of subjection, and leaves them full masters of their own time and their own thoughts, a liberty which they do not feel too dearly bought, at the expense of fatigue, of hunger, and of all the other inconveniences incidental to those who travel without money. Those who can recollect journeys of this kind, with all the shifts, necessities and petty adventures, which attend them, will not wonder at the attractions which they had for such

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a youth as Goldsmith. Notwithstanding these erratic expeditions, he was admitted Bachelor of Arts in 1749.

Goldsmith's persevering friend, Mr. Contarino seems to have recommended the direction of his nephew's studies to medicine and in the year 1752, he was settled at Edinburgh to pursue that science. Of his residence in Scotland, Goldsmith retained no favourable recollections. He was thoughtless, and he was cheated; he was poor, and he was nearly starved. Yet, in a very lively letter from Edinburgh addressed to Robert Branton of Ballymahon, he closes a sarcastic description of the country and its inhabitants with the good-humoured candour which made so distinguished a part of his character. 'An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself, and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and Nature a power to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy, my dear Bob, such blessings, while I may sit down

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and laugh at the world and at myself the most ridiculous object in it

From Edinburgh our student passed to Leyden but not without the diversities of an arrest for debt a captivity of seven days at Newcastle from having been found in company with some Scotchmen in the French service and the no less unpleasant variety of a storm At Leyden, Goldsmith was peculiarly exposed to a temptation which he never in any period of his life could easily resist The opportunities of gambling were frequent—he seldom declined them and was at length stripped of every shilling.

In this hopeless condition Goldsmith commenced his travels with one shirt in his pocket and a devout reliance on Providence It is understood that in the narrative of George eldest son of the Vicar of Wakefield the author gave a sketch of the resources which enabled him on foot and without money to make the tour of Europe Through Germany and Holland he had recourse to his

violin in which he was tolerably skilled: and a lively tune usually procured him a lodging in some peasant's cottage for the evening. In Italy, where his musical skill was held in less esteem, he found hospitality by disputing at the monasteries, in the character of a travelling scholar, upon certain philosophical theses, which the learned inhabitants were obliged by their foundation, to uphold against all unpugners. Thus, he obtained sometimes money, sometimes lodgings. He must have had other resources to procure both, which he has not thought proper to intimate. The foreign Universities afford similar facilities to poor scholars, with those presented by the Monasteries. Goldsmith resided at Padua for several months, and is said to have taken a degree at Louvain. Thus far is certain that an account of the tour made by so good a judge of human nature, in circumstances so singular, would have made one of the most entertaining books in the world: and it is both wonder and pity, that Goldsmith

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did not hit upon a publication of his travels, amongst the other literary resources in which his mind was fertile. He was not ignorant of the advantages which his mode of travelling had opened to him. "Countries," he says in his *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, "were very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in his post-chaise and the pilgrim who walks the great tour on foot, will form very different conclusions. *Haud inexpertus loquor*. Perhaps he grew ashamed of the last admission which he afterwards omitted. Goldsmith spent about twelve months in these wanderings and landed in England in the year 1746 after having perambulated France, Italy, and part of Germany.

Poverty was now before our author in all its bitterness. His Irish friends had long renounced or forgotten him, and then the wretched post of usher to an academy, of which he has drawn so piteous a

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picture in George's account of himself, was his refuge from actual starving. Unquestionably, his description was founded on personal recollections where he says, 'I was up early and late, I was brow-beat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to seek civility abroad. This state of slavery he underwent at Peckham Academy, and had such bitter recollection thereof, as to be offended at the slightest allusion to it. An acquaintance happening to use the proverbial phrase, "Oh, that is all a holiday at Peckham." Goldsmith reddened, and asked if he meant to affront him. From this miserable condition he escaped with difficulty, to that of journeyman, or rather shop-porter, to a chemist in Fish-street-hill in whose service he was recognized by Dr. Sleigh his countryman and fellow-student at Edinburgh, who, to his eternal honour, relieved Oliver Goldsmith from this state of slavish degradation.

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Under the auspices of his friend and countryman, Goldsmith commenced practice as a physician about the Bankside and afterwards near the Temple, and although unsuccessful in procuring fees had soon plenty of patients. It was now that he first thought of having recourse to that pen which afterwards afforded the public so much delight. He wrote he laboured he compiled he is described by one contemporary as wearing a rusty full-trimmed black suit the very livery of the Muses, with his pockets stuffed with papers, and his head with projects. Gradually he forced himself and his talents into notice, and was at last enabled to write, in one letter to a friend that he was too poor to be gazed at but too rich to need assistance and to boast in another of the refined conversation which he was sometimes admitted to partake in.

He now circulated proposals for publishing by subscription his *Essay on Polite Literature in Europe* the profits of which he destined to equipping himself



for India, having obtained from the Company the appointment of physician to one of their factories on the coast of Coromandel. But to rise in literature was more his desire than to increase his fortune. "I eagerly long," he said, "to embrace every opportunity to separate myself from the vulgar as much in my circumstances as I am already in my sentiments —— I find I want constitution and a strong steady disposition which alone makes men great. I will, however, correct my faults, since I am conscious of them."

Goldsmith's versatile talents and ready pen soon engaged him in the service of the booksellers, and doubtless the touches of his spirit and humour were used to enliven the dull pages of many a sorry miscellany and review: a mode of living which, joined to his own improvidence, rendered his income as fluctuating as his occupation. He wrote many essays for various periodical publications, and afterwards collected them into one volume, finding that they were unceremoniously

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appropriated by his contemporaries. In the preface he compares himself to the fat man in a famine who when his fellow-sufferers propose to feast on the superfluous part of his person insisted with some justice on having the first slice himself. But his most elaborate effort in this style is the *Citizen of the World* letters supposed to be written by a Chinese philosopher resident in England in imitation of the *Lettres Persanes* of Montesquieu. Still however though subsisting thus precariously he was getting forward in society and had already in the year 1761, made his way as far as Dr Johnson who seems from their first acquaintance till death separated them to have entertained for Goldsmith the most sincere friendship regarding his genius with respect his failings with indulgence and his person with affection.

It was probably soon after this first acquaintance that necessity the parent of so many works of genius gave birth to

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the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The circumstances attending the sale of the work to the fortunate publisher, are too singular to be told in any other words than those of Johnson as reported by his faithful chronicler, Boswell

I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith, that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit: told the

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whom he now associated, that the simplicity of his character mingled with an inaccuracy of expression an undistinguishing spirit of vanity and a hurriedness of conception, which led him often into absurdity rendered Dr Goldsmith in some degree the butt of the company Garrick in particular who probably presumed somewhat on the superiority of a theatrical manager over a dramatic author shot at him many shafts of small epigrammatic wit It is likely that Goldsmith began to feel that this spirit was carried too far and to check it in the best taste he composed his celebrated poem of *Retaliation* in which the characters and feelings of his associates are drawn with satire at once pungent and good humoured Garrick is smartly chastised Burke the dinner bell of the House of Commons is not spared and of all the more distinguished names of the Club Johnson and Reynolds alone escape the lash of the satirist The former is not mentioned, and the latter

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is even dismissed with unqualified and affectionate applause. *Retaliation* had the effect of placing the author on a more equal footing with his society than he had ever before assumed. Even against the despotism of Johnson though much respecting him and as much beloved by him, Goldsmith made a more spirited stand than was generally ventured upon by the compeers of that arbitrary Sultan of Literature. Of this Boswell has recorded a striking instance. Goldsmith had been descanting on the difficulty and importance of making animals in an apologue speak in character and particularly instanced the Fable of the Little Fishes. Observing that Doctor Johnson was laughing scornfully, he proceeded smartly "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think, for if *you* were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

To support the expense of his new dignities, Goldsmith laboured incessantly at the literary oar. The *Letters on the*

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*History of England* commonly ascribed to Lord Lyttleton and containing an excellent and entertaining abridgement of the annals of Britain in the works of Goldsmith His mode of compiling them we learn from some interesting anecdotes of the author communicated to the public by Lee Lewis an actor of genius whom he patronized and with whom he often associated

‘He first read in a morning from *Hamlet* *Rapin* and sometimes *Kenet* as much as he designed for one letter marking down the passages referred to on a sheet of paper with remarks He then rode or walked out with a friend or two whom he constantly had with him returned to dinner spent the day generally conversationally without much drinking (which he was never in the habit of) and when he went up to bed took up his books and paper with him where he generally wrote the chapter or the best part of it before he went to rest This latter exercise cost him very little trouble he said for having all his materials ready for him

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he wrote it with as much facility as a common letter

‘ But of all his compilations, he used to say, his *Selections of English Poetry* showed more ‘the art of profession’ Here he did nothing but mark the particular passages with a red-lead pencil and for this he got *two hundred pounds*—but then he used to add, ‘a man shows his judgment in these selections and he may be often twenty years of his life cultivating that judgment ’

Goldsmith, amid these more petty labours, aspired to the honours of the sock, and the *Good-Natured Man* was produced at Covent Garden 29th January, 1768, with the moderate success of nine nights’ run The principal character the author probably drew from the weak side of his own; for no man was more liable than Goldsmith to be gulled by pretended friends The character of Croaker, highly comic in itself, and admirably represented by Shuter, helped to save the piece which was endangered by the scene

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of the bailiffs, then considered as too vulgar for the stage. Upon the whole however, Goldsmith is said to have cleared five hundred pounds by this dramatic performance. He hired better chambers in the Temple, embarked more boldly in literary speculation and unfortunately at the same time enlarged his ideas of expense and indulged his habit of playing at games of hazard. The *Memoirs* or *Anecdotes* which we have before quoted give a minute and curious description of his habits and enjoyments about this period when he was constantly occupied with extracts, abridgements, and other arts of book-making but at the same time working slowly and in secret, on those immortal verses which secured for him so high a rank among English poets.

Goldsmith, though quick enough at prose continues Mr Lewis, was rather slow in his poetry—not from the tardiness of fancy but the time he took in pointing the sentiment and polishing the versification. He was by his own confession,



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four or five years collecting materials in all his country excursions for this poem (*The Deserted Village*) and was actually engaged in the construction of it above two years. His manner of writing poetry was this: he first sketched a part of his design in prose in which he threw out his ideas as they occurred to him; he then sat carefully down to versify them, and add such other ideas as he thought better fitted to the subject. He sometimes would exceed his prose design by writing several verses impromptu but these he would take uncommon pains afterwards to revise, lest they should be found unconnected with his main design.

“The writer of these *Memoirs* (Lee Lewes) called upon the Doctor the second morning after he had begun *The Deserted Village* and to him he communicated the plan of his poem. ‘Some of my friends,’ continued he, ‘differ with me on this plan and think this depopulation of villages does not exist—but I am myself satisfied of the fact. I remember it in my own country,

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and have seen it in this. He then read what he had done of it that morning, beginning

Darlingly bowers of innocence and ease  
Seats of my youth when every spirit all  
Please

It was then have I retired thy grove  
Where I might have seen a clearer face  
seen

How I have I pause'd on every charm —  
The sheltering tree, the cultivated farm,  
The never-failing rick, the busy mill,  
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill

The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade

For talking age and whistling youth remade

Come says he let me tell you this is  
no bad morning's work and now my dear  
boy if you are not better engaged I should  
be glad to enjoy a *shoemaker's holiday*  
with you. This *shoemaker's holiday* was  
a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith  
and was spent in the following innocent  
manner —

Three or four of his intimate friends  
were invited at his chambers to breakfast

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about ten o'clock in the morning; at eleven they proceeded by the City-Road, and through the fields to Highbury Barn, to dinner about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White Conduit House to drink tea and concluded the evening by supping at the Grecian or Temple Exchange Coffee-houses or at the Globe, in Fleet Street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry kept at Highbury Barn about this time (five-and-twenty years ago, in 1796) at tenpence perhead, including a penny to the waiter, and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of this day's fete never exceeded a crown, and oftener from three-and-sixpence to four shillings for which the party obtained good air and exercise, good living, the example of simple manners and good conversation."

The reception given to the *Deserted Village*, so full of natural elegance, simplicity, and pathos, was of the warmest kind. The publisher showed at once his skill

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and generosity by pressing upon Doctor Goldsmith a hundred pounds which the author insisted upon returning when upon computation he found that it came to nearly a crown for every couplet a sum which he conceived no poem could be worth. The sale of the poem made him ample amends for this unusual instance of moderation. I pass now to Billington where his brother the clergyman had his living claims the honour of being the spot from which the locusts of the *Deserted Village* were derived. The church which tops the neighbouring hill the mill and the lake are still pointed out and a hawthorn has suffered the penalty of poetical celebrity being cut to pieces by those admirers of the bard who desired to have classical tooth pick cases and tobacco-stoppers. Much of this supposed locality may be fanciful but it is a pleasing tribute to the poet in the land of his fathers.

Goldsmith's *Abridgements of History of Rome and England* may here be noticed

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They are eminently well calculated to introduce youth to the knowledge of their studies for they exhibit the most interesting and striking events without entering into controversy or dry detail. Yet the tone assumed in the *History of England* drew on the author the resentment of the more zealous Whigs who accused him of betraying the liberties of the people, when 'God knows' as he expresses himself in a letter to Langton, 'I had no thought for or against liberty in my head, my whole aim being to make up a book of decent size, and which, as Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody.'

His celebrated play of *She Stoops to Conquer* was Goldsmith's next work of importance. If it be the object of comedy to make an audience laugh, Johnson says that it was better obtained by this play than by any other of the period. Lee Lewes was, for the first time, produced in a speaking character, as young Marlow, and is, therefore, entitled to record his own recollections concerning the piece.

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The first night of its performance Goldsmith in a id off being at the Theatre was found snoring between seven and eight o'clock in the Mall St James's Park and it was on the remonstrance of a friend who told him how useful his presence might be in making some sudden alterations which might be found necessary in the piece that he was prevailed on to go to the Theatre. He entered the stage-door just in the middle of the fifth act when there was a hiss at the improbability of Mrs. Hardcastle supposing herself forty miles off though on her own ground, and near the house. What is that? says the Doctor terrified at the sound. Pshaw Doctor says Colman who was standing by the side of the scene don't be fearful of squibs when we have been sitting almost these two hours upon a barrel of gunpowder.

In the *Life of Dr Goldsmith* prefixed to his Works the above reply of Colman is said to have happened at the first rehearsal of the piece but the fact

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which it was, nevertheless impossible for him to carry on with that dispatch which the booksellers thought themselves entitled to expect. One of his last publications was a *History of the Earth and Animated Nature* in six volumes which is to science what his abridgements are to history—a book which indicates no depth of research or accuracy of information but which presents to the ordinary reader a general and interesting view of the subject couched in the clearest and most beautiful language and abounding with excellent reflections and illustrations. It was of this work that Johnson threw out the remark which he afterwards interwove in his friend's epitaph—He is now writing a Natural History and will make it as agreeable as a Persian Tale.

But the period of his labours was now near. Goldsmith had for some time been subject to fits of the strain, brought on by too severe application to sedentary labours and one of those attacks aggravated by mental distress produced a fever

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This elegant epitaph was the subject of a petition to Dr. Johnson, in the form of a round robin, entreating him to substitute an English inscription as more proper for an author who had distinguished himself entirely by works written in English but the Doctor kept his purpose.

The person and features of Dr. Goldsmith were rather unfavourable. He was a short stout man with a round face much marked with the small-pox, and a low forehead which is represented as projecting in a singular manner. Yet these ordinary features were marked by a strong expression of reflection and of observation.

The peculiarities of Goldsmith's *disposition* have been already touched upon in the preceding narrative. He was a friend to virtue and in his most playful papers never forgets what is due to it. A gentleness delicacy and purity of feeling distinguishes whatever he wrote and by its correspondence to the generosity of a disposition which knew no bounds but his last *humanity*. It was an attribute



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that nothing was done better than he himself could have performed it, and sometimes made himself ridiculous by hastily undertaking to distinguish himself upon subjects which he did not understand. But with these weaknesses, and with that of carelessness in his own affairs, terminates all that censure can say of Goldsmith. The folly of submitting to imposition may be well balanced with the universality of his benevolence, and the wit which his writings evince more than counterbalances his defects in conversation if these could be of consequence to the present and future generations. As a writer says Dr. Johnson, he was of the most distinguished class. Whatever he composed, he did it better than any other man could. And whether we regard him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as a historian, he was one of the first writers of his time, and will ever stand in the foremost class.

Excepting some short tales, Goldsmith gave to the department of the novelist only one work—the inimitable

Pastor himself, with all the worth and excellency which ought to distinguish the ambassador of God to man and yet with just so much of pedantry and of literary vanity as serves to show that he is made of mortal mould and subject to human failings is one of the best and the most pleasing pictures ever designed. It is perhaps impossible to place frail humanity before us in an attitude of more simple dignity than the Vicar in his character of pastor of parent and of husband. His excellent help-mate with all her motherly cunning and housewifely prudence loving and respecting her husband but counterplotting his wisest schemes at the dictates of maternal vanity forms an excellent counterpart. Both with their children around them their quiet labour and domestic happiness compose a fireside picture of such a perfect kind as perhaps is nowhere else equalled. It is sketched indeed from common life and is a strong contrast to the exaggerated and extraordinary characters and incidents

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which are the resource of those authors, who, like Bayes, make it their business to elevate and surprise, but the very simplicity of this charming book renders the pleasure it affords more permanent. We read the *Vicar of Wakefield* in youth and in age. We return to it again and again, and bless the memory of an author who contrives so well to reconcile us to human nature. Whether we choose the pathetic and distressing incidents of the fire the scenes at the jail, or the lighter and humorous parts of the story, we find the best and truest sentiments enforced in the most beautiful language; and perhaps there are few characters of purer dignity described than that of the excellent pastor, rising above sorrow and oppression and labouring for the conversion of those felons, into whose company he had been thrust by his villainous creditor. In too many works of this class, the critics must apologize for or censure particular passages in the narrative, as unfit to be perused by youth and innocence. But the

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wreath of Goldsmith is unsullied he wrote to exalt virtue and expose vice and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors We close his volume with a sigh that such an author should have written so little from the stores of his own genius and that he should have been so prematurely removed from the sphere of literature which he so highly adorned

DE QUINCEY

# The Vision of Sudden Death

THE incident so memorable in itself by its features of horror and so scetrical by its grouping for the eye which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death* occurred to myself in the dead of night as a solitary spectator when seated on the box of Manchester and Glasgow mail in the second or third summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post-offices were so arranged either through necessity or through defect of system as to make it requisite for the

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man north-western mail (*i.e.*, the down mail) on reaching Manchester, to halt for a number of hours, how many, I do not remember—six or seven, I think, but the result was that in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northwards about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air, meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat at the post-office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen and the streets being at the hour empty, so as to offer no opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way and did not reach the post-office until it was considerably past midnight; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning), I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail blazing through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was not yet lost. Past the time it was; but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to start. I ascended to my seat on the

## THE VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH

box, where my cloak was still lying, as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a nautical discoverer who leaves a bit of bunting on the shore of his discovery by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket-handkerchief once and for ever upon that virgin soil. thenceforward claiming the *jus domini* to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the centre of the earth below it, so that all people found after this warning either aloft in upper chambers of the atmosphere or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers—hunted that is to say, or decapitated as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant the owner of the said pocket handkerchief. In the present case, it is probable that my cloak might not have been respected, and the



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*jus gentium* might have been cruelly violated in my person—for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality—but it so happened that on this night, there was no other outside passenger, and thus the crime, which else was but too probable missed fire for want of a criminal.

Having mounted the box I took a small quantity of laudanum having already travelled two hundred and fifty miles—*viz.* from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the box the coachman. And in *that* also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Virgil as

“*Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens cui  
lumen ademptum.*”

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He answered to the conditions in every one of the items — 1 a monster he was 2 dreadful 3 shapeless 4, huge 5 who had lost an eye. But why should *that* delight me? Had he been one of the Calendars in the *Arabian Nights* and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity what right had I to exult in his misfortune? I did *not* exult. I delighted in no man's punishment though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos 1 2 3 4 5) identified in an instant an old friend of mine whom I had known at the south for some years as the most masterly of mal-coachmen. It showed his doleful honesty (though, observe not his discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation however he admitted that I had the whip hand of him. On this present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was

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Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected from such explanations as he volunteered that he had an interest at stake in some suit-at-law now pending at Lancaster so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station, for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his lawsuit.

Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrastinating mail, and this procrastinating post-office. Can't they take a lesson upon that subject from *me*? Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the post-office. Will the post-office lay its hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for *me*? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war, by wind, by

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weather in the packet service which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour it seems the post-office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheaten correspondence of Glasgow and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser intermediate towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard Manchester, good bye, we've lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post-office which, however, though I do not mean to part with a servicable ground of complaint and one which really is such for the horses to me secretly is an advantage since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour amongst the next eight or nine and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile extra per hour. Off we are at last and at eleven miles an hour and for the moment I detect no changes in the energy or in the skill of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal which virtually (though not in law) is the capital of Westmoreland there were at this time seven stages of eleven miles each

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Within the first three stages lay the foundation, the progress, and termination of our night's adventure. During the first stage I found out that Cyclops was mortal—he was liable to the shocking affection of sleep—a thing which previously I had never suspected. If a man indulges in the vicious habit of sleeping, all the skill in aurigation of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions avails him nothing. Oh Cyclops! I exclaimed 'thou art mortal. My friend, thou snoorest.' Through the first eleven miles, however, this infirmity—which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon—betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself, which, instead of mending matters, had open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster, in consequence of which, for three nights and three days, he had not lain down in a bed. During the day, he was waiting for his

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own summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment was drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night or that part of it which at sea would form the middle watch he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness but in a way which made it much more alarming since now after several days resistance to this infinity at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout the second stage he grew more and more drowsy. In the second mile of the third stage he surrendered himself finally and without a struggle to his perilous temptation. All his past resistance had but deepened the weight of his final oppression. Seven atmospheres of sleep rested upon him and to consummate the ease our worthy guard after singing "Love amongst the roses for perhaps thirty times without invitation and without applause had in revenge moodily resigned

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himself to slumber - not so deep, doubtless, as the coachman's, but deep enough for mischief. And thus, at last, about ten miles from Preston, it came about that I found myself left in charge of his majesty's London and Glasgow mail, then running at the least twelve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal than else it must have been thought, was the condition of the roads at night during the assizes. By sunset it usually happened that through utter exhaustion amongst men and horses the roads sank into profound silence. Except the exhaustion in the vast adjacent country of York from a contested election, no such silence succeeding to no such fiery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

On this occasion, the usual silence and solitude prevailed along the road. Not a hoof nor a wheel was to be heard. And to strengthen this false luxurious confidence in the noiseless roads it happened also that the night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part,

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though slightly alive to the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August in the middle of which lay my own birthday—a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often sigh-born thoughts. The country was my own native country—upon which in its southern section more than upon any equal area known to man past or present had descended the original curse of labour in its heaviest form not mastering the bodies only of men as of slaves or criminals in mines but working through the fiercest will. Upon no equal space of earth was or ever had been the same energy of human power put forth duly. At this particular season also of the assizes that dreadful hurricane of flight and pursuit as it might have seemed to a stranger which swept to and from Lancaster all day long hunting the country up and down and regularly subsiding back into silence about sunset could not fail (when united with this permanent dis-



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junction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labour to point the thoughts paterfamilias upon that counter vision of rest of sabbathly repose from strife and sorrow towards which as to their secret lives the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in schilade continually travelling. Obliquely upon our left we were nearing the sea which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of lull or repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn, were by this time blending; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless and dreamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses, which running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance, there was no sound abroad. In the clouds, and on the earth, prevailed

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the same majestic peace and in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the ruin of our sublimer thoughts which are the thoughts of our infancy we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmosphere. Whatever we may swear with our false feigning lips in our faithful hearts we still believe and must for ever believe in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still in the confidence of children that tread without fear every chamber in their father's house and to whom no door is closed we in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like this ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upwards to the sandals of God.

Suddenly from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound as of some motion on the distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment. I listened in awe but then it died away. Once roused however I could not but observe

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with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing of motion: and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have as regards *thought*, that in the first step towards the possibility of a misfortune I see its total evolution: in the reflex of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion: in the first syllable of the dreadful sentence, I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves. *Us*, our bulk and impetu charged against peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that were matter of laughter

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to look back upon, the first face of which was horror—the parting face a jest for my anxiety to rest upon *our* interests. The mail was not built I felt assured nor bespoken that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But my carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this ominous accident of our situation. We were on the wrong side of the road. But then it may be said the other party, if other there was might also be on the wrong side and two wrongs might make a right. *That* was not likely. The same motive which had drawn us to the right-hand side of the road—viz the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved centre—would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would therefore to a certainty be travelling on the same side.

Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead wh! what a sullen mystery of fear what a sigh of woe was

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that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard ! A whisper it was—a whisper from, perhaps, four miles off—secretly announcing a ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevitable; that being known, was not therefore, healed. What could be done—who was it that could do it—to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering coachman? You reader, think that it would have been in *your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be? Was it industry in a taxed cart? Was it youthful gaiety in a gig? Was it sorrow that loitered, or joy that raced? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion.

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Whoever were the travellers something must be done to warn them. Upon the other party rests the active responsibility but upon us—and woe is me! that us was reduced to my frail opium-shattered self—rests the responsibility of warning. Yet how should this be accomplished? Might I not sound the guard's horn? Already, on the first thought I was making my way over the roof to the guard's seat. But this, from the accident which I have mentioned of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside travelling. And fortunately. Before I had lost much time in the attempt our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that fatal stile where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished. The court was sitting the case was heard the judge had finished and only the verdict was yet in arrears.

Before us lay an avenue straight as

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an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length, and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light, but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! What are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady—though really I see nobody, at an hour and on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you—is it therefore requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour, and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, there is but a minute and a-half. Oh heavens! What is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting.

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what help can I offer? Strange it is and to a mere auditor of the tale might seem laughable that I should need a suggestion from the *Iliad* to prompt the sole resource that remained. Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus aided by Pallas? No but then I need not the shout that should alarm all Asymblant such a shout would suffice as might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one pig horse. I shouted—and the young man heard me not. A second time I shouted—and now he heard me for now he raised his head.

Here, then all had been done that by me, could be done more on my part was not possible. Mine had been the first step, the second was for the young man, the third for God. If said I this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young girl at his side—or loving her not if he feels the obligation pressing



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upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his protection—he will at least make some effort to save her. If *that* fails, he will not perish the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it—and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in vain to save. But, if he makes no effort, shrinking, without a struggle, from his duty, he himself will not the less certainly perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less; and why not? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in the world? No: let him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted upon him; and, in that case, all our grief will be reserved for the fate of the helpless girl who now, upon the least shadow of failure in *him*, must, by the fiercest of translations—must, without time for a prayer—must within seventy seconds stand before the judgment-seat of God.

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But even he was not sudden had been the call upon him and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw he heard he comprehended the ruin that was coming down already its gloomy shadow darkened above him and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah! What a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a day! Ah! what a sublime thing does courage seem when some fearful summons on the great deeps of life carries a man as if running before a hurricane up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which he two courses and a voice says to him *rebel*. One way has hope like the other, and mourn for ever! How grand a triumph if even then amidst the raving of all around him and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation—is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God and to seek his counsel from *Him*!

1 or seven seconds it might be of his

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seventy. the stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us. as if to search and value every element in the conflict before him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more perhaps he sat with eyes upraised. like one that prayed in sorrow, under some extremity of doubt. for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose. stood upright; and by a powerful strain upon the reins. raising his horse's fore-feet from the ground he slewed him round on the pivot of his hind-legs. so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved. except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done nothing was done: for the little carriage still occupied the very centre of our path. though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late. fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted: and one

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almighty bound man wad to clear the ground. Hurry, then hurry for the flying moments—*they* hurry! Oh hurry hurry my brave young man! for the cruel hoofs of our horses—*they* also hurry! Fast are the flying moments faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for him if human energy can suffice. Faithful was he that drove to his terrific duty faithful was the horse to his command. One blow one impulse given with voice and hand by the stranger one rush from the horse one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence landed the docile creature's fore-feet upon the crown or arching centre of the rowl. The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow *that* was evident even to my own ignited sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety if upon the wreck that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage—was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin? What power could answer

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the question ? Glance of eye, thought of man wing of angel which of these had speed enough to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other ? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly, than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly. His back was now turned to us, not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril, but by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed—that all was finished as regarded any further effort of *his*. Already in resignation he had rested from his struggle, and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, “Father, which art in heaven do Thou finish above what I on earth have attempted.” Faster than ever mill-race we ran past them in our inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurricanes that must have sounded in their young ears at the moment of our transit ! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke

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aloud. Either with the swingle-bar or with the hunch of our near leader we had struck the off-wheel of the little wag which stood rather obliquely and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near wheel. The blow from the fury of our passage resounded terribly. I rose in horror to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down and looked back upon the scene which in a moment told its own tale and wrote all its records on my heart for ever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably with his fore-feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He of the whole party might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little canvas carriage—partly, perhaps from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement partly from the thundering blow we had given to it—as if it sympathized with human horror was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young

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man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round: for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady—

But the lady—! Oh, heavens! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case: suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night—from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawn-light, dreamlight—from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love—suddenly as from the woods and fields—suddenly as from the

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chambers of the air opening in revelation—suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of catracts. Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered the strife was finished the vision was closed. In the twinkling of an eye our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle at right angles we wheeled into our former direction the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant and swept it into my dreams for ever.



## The Death of Nelson

It had been part of Nelson's prayer that the British fleet might be distinguished by humanity in the victory which he expected. Setting in example himself he twice gave orders to cease firing on the *Redoubtable* supposing that she had struck because her guns were silent for as she carried no flag there was no means of instantly ascertaining the fact. From this ship which he had thus twice spared he received his death. A ball fired from her mizen-top which in the then situation of the two vessels was not more than fifteen yards from that part of the deck where he was standing struck the admiral on his left shoulder about a quarter after one just in the heat of

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action. He fell upon his face, on the spot which was covered with his poor secretary's blood.

Hardy, who was a few steps from him, turning round, saw three men raising him up. "They have done for me at last, Hardy," said he. "I hope not," cried Hardy—"Yes," he replied, "my backbone is shot through." Yet even now, not for a moment losing his presence of mind, he observed, as they were carrying him down the ladder, that the tiller-ropes, which had been shot away, were not yet replaced, and ordered that new ones should be rove immediately; then that he might not be seen by the crew, he took out his handkerchief, and covered his face and his stars. Had he but concealed these badges of honour from the enemy, England perhaps would not have had cause to receive with sorrow the news of the battle of Trafalgar.

The cockpit was crowded with wounded and dying men, over whose bodies he was, with some difficulty, conveyed, and

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laid upon a pallet in the midshipmen's berth. It was soon perceived, upon examination, that the wound was mortal. Thus, however, was concealed from all except Captain Hardy, the chaplain, and the medical attendants. He himself being certain from the sensation in his back and the gush of blood he felt momentarily within his breast that no human care could avail him, insisted that the surgeon should leave him and attend to those to whom he might be useful. For, said he, 'you can do nothing for me.'

All that could be done was to fan him with paper and frequently to give him lemonade to alleviate his intense thirst. He was in great pain and expressed much anxiety for the event of the action which now began to declare itself. As often as a ship struck the crew of the *Victory* hurried, and at every hurrah a visible expression of joy gleamed in the eyes and marked the countenance of the dying hero. But he became impatient to see Hardy, and as that officer though

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often, sent for, could not leave the deck, Nelson feared that some fatal cause prevented him and repeatedly cried "Will no one bring Hardy to me? He must be killed he is surely dead!"

An hour and ten minutes elapsed from the time when Nelson received his wound before Hardy could come to him. They shook hands in silence, Hardy in vain struggling to suppress the feelings of that most painful and yet sublimest moment. "Well Hardy," said Nelson, "how goes the day with us?"—"Very well," replied Hardy. "Ten ships have struck; but five of the van have tacked and show an intention to bear down upon the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our fresh ships round and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing." "I hope," said Nelson, "none of our ships have struck?"—Hardy answered "There was no fear of that."

Then, and not till then Nelson spoke of himself. "I am a dead man, Hardy," said he. "I am going fast; it will be all

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over with me soon. Come nearer to me. Let my dear Lady Hamilton have my hat and all other things belonging to me. Hardy observed that he hoped Mr. Benty could yet hold out some prospect of life.

Oh no, he replied, it is impossible. My back is shot through. Benty will tell you so. Hardy then once more shook hands with him, and with a heart almost bursting, hastened upon deck.

By this time all feeling below the breast was gone, and Nelson having made the surgeon ascertain this, said to him, You know I am gone. I know it. I feel something rising in my breast, putting his hand on his left side, which tells me so. And upon Benty's inquiring whether his pain was very great, he replied, So great that he wished he was dead. Yet, said he in a lower voice, 'one would like to live a little longer too.

Captain Hardy, some fifty minutes after he had left the cockpit, returned, and again taking the hand of his dying friend and commander, congratulated

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him on having gained a complete victory. How many of the enemy were taken he did not know, as it was impossible to perceive them distinctly, but fourteen or fifteen at least. "That's well," cried Nelson, "but I bargained for twenty." And then in a stronger voice he said "Anchor, Hardy, anchor" Hardy upon this, hinted that Admiral Collingwood would take upon himself the direction of affairs. "Not while I live, Hardy," said the dying Nelson, ineffectually endeavouring to raise himself from the bed; "do you anchor. His previous orders for preparing to anchor had shown how clearly he foresaw the necessity of this. Presently calling Hardy back, he said to him in a low voice, "Don't throw me overboard;" and he desired that he might be buried by his parents, unless it should please the king to order otherwise.

"Kiss me, Hardy," said he Hardy knelt down and kissed his cheek: and Nelson said, "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty" Hardy

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stood over him in silence for a moment or two, then knelt again and kissed his forehead. 'Who is that?' said Nelson and being informed he replied 'God bless you Hardy.' And Hardy then left him for ever.

Nelson now desired to be turned upon his right side, and said 'I wish I had not left the deck for I shall soon be gone.' Death was indeed rapidly approaching. He said to the chaplain, "Doctor, I have not been a *great* sinner" and after a short pause

Remember that I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a legacy to my country.' His articulation now became difficult but he was distinctly heard to say 'Thank God I have done my duty.' These words he repeatedly pronounced and they were the last words which he uttered. He expired at thirty minutes after four—three hours and a quarter after he had received his wound.

The death of Nelson was felt in England as something more than a public

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calamity men started at the intelligence, and turned pale, as if they had heard of the loss of a dear friend. An object of our admiration and affection of our pride and of our hopes, was suddenly taken from us, and it seemed as if we had never till then known how deeply we loved and revered him. What the country had lost in its great naval hero—the greatest of our own and of all former times—was scarcely taken into the account of grief.

So perfectly, indeed, had he performed his part that the maritime war, after the battle of Trafalgar, was considered at an end. The fleets of the enemy were not merely defeated, but destroyed, new navies must be built, and a new race of seamen reared for them, before the possibility of their invading our shores could again be contemplated. It was not, therefore, from any selfish reflection upon the magnitude of our loss that we mourned for him; the general sorrow was of a higher character.



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The people of England grieved that funeral ceremonies and public monuments and posthumous rewards were all which they could bestow upon him whom the king the legislature and the nation would have alike delighted to honour whom every tongue would have blessed whose presence in every village through which he might have passed would have wakened the church-bells, have given schoolboys a holiday, have drawn children from their sports to gaze upon him and old men from the chimney-corner to look upon Nelson ere they died

The victory of Trafalgar was celebrated indeed with the usual forms of rejoicing but they were without joy for such already was the glory of the British navy, through Nelson's surpassing genius that it scarcely seemed to receive any addition from the most signal victory that ever was achieved upon the seas, and the destruction of this mighty fleet, by which all the

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maritime schemes of France were totally frustrated, hardly appeared to add to our security or strength : for while Nelson was living to watch the combined squadrons of the enemy, we felt ourselves as secure as now, when they were no longer in existence

There was reason to suppose, from the appearances upon opening his body, that in the course of nature he might have attained like his father, to a good old age. Yet he cannot be said to have fallen prematurely whose work was done: nor ought he to be lamented who died so full of honours and at the height of human fame.

The most triumphant death is that of the martyr : the most awful, that of the martyred patriot : the most splendid, that of the hero in the hour of victory : and if the chariot and the horses of fire had been vouchsafed for Nelson's translation, he could scarcely have departed in a brighter blaze of glory. He has left us, not, indeed his mantle of inspiration,

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but a name and an example which are at this hour inspiring thousands of the youths of England—a name which is our pride, and an example which will continue to be our shield and our strength. Thus it is that the spirits of the great and the wise continue to live and to act *after them*.



THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

## The Trial of Warren Hastings

THE preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly and on the thirteenth of February 1788 the sittings of the Court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye more gorgeous with jewellery and cloth of gold more attractive to grown-up children than that which was then exhibited at Westminster but, perhaps there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated a reflecting an imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant to the present and to the past were collected on one spot and in one hour. All the talents and all the

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accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilisation were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from co-operation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backward, through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid; or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange characters from the right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of Benares, and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed

the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting The avenues were lined with grenadiers The streets were kept clear by cavalry The peers robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-arms The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law Near a hundred and seventy lords three fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal The junior Baron present led the way, George Eliott Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain The lord

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procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The grey old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-haired young daughters of the House of Brunswick. There the Ambassadors of great Kings and Commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman



Empire thought of the days when Cicero  
pleaded the cause of Sicily against  
Verres and when before a senate which  
still retained some show of freedom  
Tiberius thundered against the oppressor  
of Africa. There were seen side by side  
the great punter and the greatest scholar  
of the age. The spectacle had allured  
Neville from the ease which has pre-  
served to us the thoughtful foreheads of so  
many writers and statesmen and the  
sweet smiles of so many noble matrons.  
It had induced Parr to suspend his labours  
in that dark and profound mine from  
which he had extracted a vast  
treasure of erudition a treasure too often  
buried in the earth too often paraded  
with injudicious and inelegant ostentation  
but still precious massive and splendid.  
There appeared the voluptuous charms of  
her to whom the heir to the throne had  
in secret pledged his faith. There too  
was she the beautiful mother of a beaute-  
ful race the Saint Cecilia whose delicate  
features lighted up by love and music art

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has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticized and exchanged repartees, under the rich peacock hangings of Mrs Montague. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone round Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

The Serjeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself, that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference

to the Court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead a brow pensive but not gloomy a mouth of inflexible decision a face pale and worn but serene on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta *Mens aequa in arduis* such was the aspect with which the great Pro-consul presented himself to his judges.

His counsel accompanied him men all of whom were afterwards raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession the bold and strong-minded Law afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and Plomer who near twenty years later successfully conducted in the same High Court the defence of Lord Melville and subsequently became Vice-Chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red

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drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers with Burke at their head appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox generally so regardless of his appearance had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment: and his commanding copious, and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor: and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact and his urbanity. But in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides.

There was Burke ignorant indeed or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator ancient or modern. There with eyes reverentially fixed on Burke appeared the finest gentleman of the age his form developed by every manly exercise his face beaming with intelligence and spirit the incansous the chivalrous, the high-souled Wintham. Nor though surrounded by such men did the youngest member pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguish themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college he had won for himself a conspicuous place in parliament. No advantage of fortune or connection was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honour. At twenty-three he has been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British

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Commons, at the bar, of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone are gone—culprit, advocates, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigour of life he is the sole representative of a great age which had passed away. But those who, within the last ten years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the clerk of the Court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges.

With an exuberance of thought and a splendour of diction which more than satisfied the highly raised expectation of the audience he described the character and institutions of the natives of India recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated and set forth the constitution of the Company and of the English Presidencies Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society as vivid as that which existed in his own mind he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor and for a moment seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant The ladies in the galleries unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence excited by the solemnity of the occasion and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and

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sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out: smelling bottles were handed round. hysterical sobs and screams were heard, and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, 'Therefore,' said he, hath it with all confidence been ordered, by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach him in the name of the 'Commons' House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honour he had sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all!"

When the deep murmur of various emotions had subsided, Mr. Fox rose to



address the Lords respecting the course of proceeding to be followed. The wish of the accusers was that the Court would bring to a close the investigation of the first charge before the second was opened. The wish of Hastings and of his counsel was that the managers should open all the charges and produce all the evidence for the prosecution before the defence began. The Lords retired to their own House to consider the question. The Chancellor took the side of Hastings. Lord Loughborough who was now in opposition supported the demand of the managers. The division showed which was the inclination of the tribunal to meet. *A majority of near three to one* decided in favour of the course for which Hastings contended.

When the Court sat again Mr Fox assisted by Mr Grey opened the charge respecting the 500,000 and several days were spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses. The next article was that relating to the Princesses of Clive

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The conduct of this part of the case was entrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity of the public to hear him was unbounded. His sparkling and highly finished declamation lasted two days ; but the Hall was crowded to suffocation during the whole time. It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived, with a knowledge of stage effect which his father might have envied, to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

June was now far advanced. The session could not last much longer : and the progress which had been made in the impeachment was not very satisfactory. There were twenty charges. On two only of these had even the case for the prosecution been heard ; and it was now a year since Hastings had been admitted to bail.

The interest taken by the public in the trial was great when the Court began

to sit, and rose to the height when Sheridan spoke on the charge relating to the Begums. From that time the excitement went down fast. The spectacle had lost the attraction of novelty. The great displays of rhetoric were over. What was behind was not of a nature to entice men of letters from their books in the morning, or to tempt ladies who had left the masquerade at two to be out of bed before eight. There remained examinations and cross-examinations. There remained statements of accounts. There remained the reading of papers filled with words unintelligible to English ears, with laes and crores, zemindars and annuities, sunnuds and perwannahs, jaghires and nuzzurs. There remained bickerings not always carried on with the best taste or with the best temper between the managers of the impeachment and the counsel for the defence, particularly between Mr Burke and Mr Law. There remained the endless marches and countermarches of the Peers between their houses.

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and the Hall, for as often as point of law was to be discussed their Lordships retired to discuss it apart and the consequence was, as a Peer wittily said, that the Judges walked and the trial stood still.

It is to be added that in the spring of 1788 when the trial commenced, no important question either of domestic or foreign policy, occupied the public mind. The proceeding in Westminster Hall, therefore naturally attracted most of the attention of Parliament and of the country. It was the one great event of that season. But in the following year the King's illness, the debates on the Regency, the expectation of a change of ministry completely diverted public attention from Indian affairs and within a fortnight after George the Third had returned thanks in St. Paul's for his recovery the States-General of France met at Versailles. In the midst of the agitation produced by these events, the impeachment was for a time almost forgotten.

The trial in the Hall went on handsomely. In the session of 1788 when the proceedings had the interest of novelty and when the Peers had little other business before them only thirty five days were given to the impeachment. In 1789 the Regency Bill occupied the Upper House till the session was far advanced. When the King recovered the circuits were beginning. The Judges left town, the Lords waited for the return of the oracles of jurisprudence and the consequence was that during the whole year only seventeen days were given to the case of *Hastings*. It was clear that the matter would be protracted to a length unprecedented in the annals of criminal law.

In truth it is impossible to deny that impeachment though it is a fine ceremony and though it may have been useful in the seventeenth century is not a proceeding from which much good can now be expected. Whatever confidence may be placed in the decision of the Peers on an appeal arising out of ordinary litigation

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it is certain that no man has the least confidence in their impartiality, when a great public functionary, charged with a great state crime, is brought to their bar. They are all politicians. There is hardly one among them whose vote on an impeachment may not be confidently predicted before a witness has been examined, and, even if it were possible to rely on their justice, they would still be quite unfit to try such a cause as that of Hastings. They sit only during half the year. They have to transact much legislative and much judicial business. The law-lords, whose advice is required to guide the unlearned majority, are employed daily in administering justice elsewhere. It is impossible therefore, that during a busy session, the Upper House should give more than a few days to an impeachment. To expect that their Lordships would give up partridge-shooting, in order to bring the greatest delinquent to speedy justice, or to relieve accused innocence by speedy acquittal,

would be unreasonable indeed. A well-constituted tribunal sitting regularly six days in the week and nine hours in the day would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years.

The result ceased to be matter of doubt from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received in the inferior courts of the realm. Those rules it is well known exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man in the most important transactions of private life. These rules at every assizes save scores of culprits whom judges, jury and spectators firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many years before at the distance of many thousands of miles conviction was, of course, out of the question.

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Several attempts were made by the friends of Hastings to put a stop to the trial. In 1789 they proposed a vote of censure upon Burke for some violent language which he had used respecting the death of Nannor and the connection between Hastings and Impey. Burke was then unpopular in the highest degree both with the House and with the country. The asperity and indecency of some expressions which he had used during the debates on the Regency had annoyed even his warmest friends. The vote of censure was carried, and those who had moved it hoped that the managers would resign in disgust. Burke was deeply hurt. But his zeal for what he considered as the cause of justice and mercy triumphed over his personal feelings. He received the censure of the House with dignity and meekness, and declared that no personal mortification or humiliation should induce him to flinch from the sacred duty which he had undertaken.



In the following year the Parliament was dissolved and the friends of Hastings entertained a hope that the new House of Commons might not be disposed to go on with the impeachment. They began by maintaining that the whole proceedings were terminated by the dissolution. Defeated on this point they made a direct motion that the impeachment should be dropped but they were defeated by the combined forces of the Government and the Opposition. It was however resolved that for the sake of expedition many of the articles should be withdrawn. In truth had not some such measure been adopted the trial would have lasted till the defendant was in his grave.

At length in the spring of 1795 the decision was pronounced, nearly eight years after Hastings had been brought by the Serjeant-at-Arms of the Commons to the bar of the Lords. On the last day of this great procedure the public curiosity, long suspended, seemed to be revived. Anxiety about the judgment there could be none for

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it had been fully proposed that there was a great majority for the defendant. Nevertheless, in obedience to the present, and the Hall was so much crowded as on the first day. But those who, having been present on the first day, now bore a part in the proceedings of the first, were few; and most of those few were altered men.

As Hastings himself said, the arrangement had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced by another. The spectator could not look at the woods oak, or at the red benches of the Peers, or at the green benches of the Commons, without seeing something that reminded him of the instability of all human things, of the instability of power and fame and life, of the more lamentable instability of friendship. The great seal was borne before Lord Loughborough, who, when the trial commenced, was a fierce opponent of Mr. Pitt's government, and who was now a member of that government, while Thurlow, who presided in the court when it first sat, estranged from all

his old allies sat scowling among the junior barons. Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day sixty had been laid in their family vaults. Still more affecting must have been the sight of the managers box. What had become of that fair fellowship, so closely bound together by public and private ties, so resplendent with every talent and accomplishment? It had been scattered by calamities more bitter than the bitterness of death. The great chiefs were still living, and still in the full vigour of their genius. But their friendship was at an end. It had been violently and publicly dissolved with tears and stormy reproaches. If those men once so dear to each other were now compelled to meet for the purpose of managing the impeachment they met as strangers whom public business had brought together and behaved to each other with cold and distant civility. Burke had in his vortex whirled away Windham. Fox had been followed by Sheridan and Grey.

## TRIAL OF WARRÉN HASTINGS

Only twenty-nine Peers voted. Of these only six found Hastings guilty on the charges relating to Cheyte Singh and to the Begums. On other charges, the majority in his favour was still greater. On some he was unanimously absolved. He was then called to the bar, was informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.



THOMAS C. ABLE

## LXVIII

CARLYLE

### Rectorial Address

ABOVE all things the interest of your own life depends upon being diligent now while it is called to-day, in this place where you have come to get education. Diligent ! That includes all virtues in it that a student can have. I mean to include in it all qualities that lead into the acquirement of real instruction and improvement in such a place. If you will believe me, you who are young, youth is the golden season of life. As you have heard it called so it verily is the sowing-time of life in which if you do not sow, or if you sow tares instead of wheat, you cannot expect to reap well afterwards and you will arrive at indeed little while in the course of years when you

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come to look back, and if you have not done what you have heard from your advisers—and among many counsellors there is wisdom—you will bitterly repent when it is too late. The habits of study acquired at Universities are of the highest importance in after-life. At the season when you are in young years the whole mind is, as it were, fluid, and is capable of forming itself into any shape that the owner of the mind pleases to order it to form itself into. The mind is in a fluid state, but it hardens up gradually to the consistency of rock or iron, and you cannot alter the habits of an old man, but as he has begun he will proceed to go on to the last. By diligence I mean among other things—and very chiefly—honesty in all your inquiries into what you are about. Pursue your studies in the way your conscience calls honest. More and more endeavour to do that. Keep. I mean to say, an accurate separation of what you have really come to know in your own minds and what is still unknown.

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I leave all that on the hypothetical side of the barrier, as things afterwards to be acquired if acquired at all and be careful not to stamp a thing as known when you do not yet know it. Count a thing known only when it is stamped on your mind so that you may survey it on all sides with intelligence.

There is such a thing as a man endeavouring to persuade himself and endeavouring to persuade others that he knows about things when he does not know more than the outside skin of them and he goes flourishing about with them.

Avoid all that is entirely unworthy of an honourable habit. Be modest and humble and diligent in your attention to what your teachers tell you who are profoundly interested in trying to bring you forward in the right way so far as they have been able to understand it. Try all things they set before you in order if possible to understand them and to value them in proportion to your fitness for them. Gradually see what kind of work you can do, for



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it is the first of all problems for a man to find out what kind of work he is to do in this universe. In fact, morality as regards study is as in all other things, the primary consideration, and overrides all others. A dishonest man cannot do anything real; and it would be greatly better if he were tied up from doing any such thing. He does nothing but darken counsel by the words he utters. That is a very old doctrine, but a very true one: and you will find it confirmed by all the thinking men that have ever lived in this long series of generations of which we are the latest.

I dare say you know, very many of you, that it is now seven hundred years since Universities were first set up in this Europe of ours. Abelard and other people had risen up with doctrines in them the people wished to hear of, and students flocked towards them from all parts of the world. There was no getting the thing recorded in books as you may now. You had to hear him speaking to

you vocally or else you could not learn at all what it was that he wanted to say.

And so they gathered together the various people who had anything to teach and formed themselves gradually under the patronage of kings and other potentates who were anxious about the culture of their populations nobly anxious for their benefit and became a University.

I dare say perhaps, you have heard it said that all that is greatly altered by the invention of printing which took place about midway between us and the origin of Universities. A man has not now to go away to where a professor is actually speaking because in most cases he can get his doctrine out of him through a book, and then read it and read it again and again and study it. I don't know that I know of any way in which the whole facts of a subject may be more completely taken in if our studies are moulded in conformity with it. Nevertheless Universities have and will continue to have an indispensable value in

## RECTORIAL ADDRESS

society—a very high value. I consider the very highest interests of man vitally intrusted to them

It remains however, a very curious truth what has been said by observant people, that the main use of the Universities in the present age is that, after you have done with all your classes, the next thing is a collection of books, a great library of good books, which you proceed to study and to read. What the Universities have mainly done—what I have found the Universities did for me, was that it taught me to read in various languages and various sciences, so that I could go into the books that treated of these things, and try anything I wanted to make myself master of gradually, as I found it suit me. Whatever you may think of all that, the clearest and most imperative duty lies on every one of you to be assiduous in your reading: and *learn to be good readers*, which is, perhaps, a more difficult thing than you imagine. Learn to be discriminative in

your reading—to read all kinds of things that you have an interest in and that you find to be really fit for what you are engaged in.

The most unhappy of all men is the man that cannot tell what he is going to do, that there is not no work cut out for him in the world and does not go into it. Idleness or work is the grand cure of all the maladies and miseries that ever beset mankind—honest work, which you intend getting done. If you are in a strait, a very good indication as to choice—perhaps the best you could get—is a book you have a great curiosity about. You are then in the readiest and best of all possible conditions to improve by that book. It is analogous to what doctors tell us about the physical health and appetites of the patient. You must learn to distinguish between false appetite and real. There is such a thing as a false appetite which will lead a man into vagaries with regard to diet, will tempt him to eat spicy things which he should not eat at all, and would not but

how this island came to be what it is.  
 You will not find it recorded in books.  
 You will find recorded in books a jumble  
 of tumults, disastrous ineptitudes and  
 all that kind of thing. But to get  
 what you want you will have to look into  
 side sources and inquire in all directions.

One remark more about your reading.  
 I do not know whether it has been suffi-  
 ciently brought home to you that there  
 are two kinds of books. When a man  
 is reading on any kind of subject in most  
 departments of books—in all books if  
 you take it in a wide sense—you will  
 find that there is a division of good books  
 and bad books—there is a good kind of  
 a book and a bad kind of a book. I am  
 not to assume that you are all very well  
 acquainted with this but I may remind  
 you that it is a very important considera-  
 tion at present. It casts aside altogether  
 the idea that people have that if they are  
 reading any book—that if an ignorant  
 man is reading any book he is doing  
 rather better than nothing at all. I

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entirely call that in question. I even venture to deny it. It would be much safer and better would he have no concern with books at all than with some of them. There are a number an increasing number of books that are decidedly to him not useful. But he will learn also that a certain number of books were written by a supreme noble kind of people—not a very great number—but a great number adhere more or less to that side of things. In short as I have written it down somewhere else, I conceive that books are like men's souls—divided into sheep and goats. Some of them are calculated to be of very great advantage in teaching—in forwarding the teaching of all generations. Others are going down down, doing more and more, wilder and wilder mischief. And for the rest, in regard to all your studies here, and whatever you may learn, you are to remember that the object is not particular knowledge—that you are going to get higher in technical perfections, and all that sort of thing. There is a higher

am that lies at the rear of all that especially among those who are intended for literary or speaking pursuits—the sacred profession. You are ever to bear in mind that there lies behind that the acquisition of what may be called wisdom—namely, sound appreciation and just decision as to all the objects that come round about you and the habit of behaving with justice and wisdom. In short great is wisdom—great is the value of wisdom. It cannot be exaggerated. The highest achievement of man—Blessed is he that getteth understanding. And that I believe occasionally may be missed very easily but never more easily than now I think. If that is a future all is a future. However I will not touch further upon that matter.

When the seven free Arts on which the old Universities were based came to be modified a little, in order to be convenient for or to promote the wants of modern society—though, perhaps, some of them are obsolete enough even yet for some of us—

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there arose a feeling that mere vocabulary, mere culture of speech, if that is what comes out of a man, though he may be a great speaker, an eloquent orator, yet there is no real substance there—if that is what was required and aimed at by the man himself, and by the community that set him upon becoming a learned man. Maid-servants I hear people complaining, are getting instructed in the “ologies,” and so on and are apparently totally ignorant of brewing, boiling, and baking; above all things, not taught what is necessary to be known, from the highest to the lowest—strict obedience, humility, and correct moral conduct. Oh, it is a dismal chapter, all that, if one went into it! What has been done by rushing after fine speech? I have written down some very fierce things about that, perhaps considerably more emphatic than I would wish them to be now; but they are deeply my conviction. There is very great necessity indeed of getting a little more silent than we are. It seems to me



the finest nations of the world—the Persians and the Americans—are going all away into wind and tongue. But it will appear sufficiently tragical by and by, long after I am away out of it. Silence is the eternal duty of a man. He won't get to any real understanding of what is complex and what is more than any other, pertinent to his interests without maintaining silence. Watch the tongue is a very old precept and a most true one. I do not want to discourage any of you from your Demosthenes and your studies of the metrics of language and all that. Believe me I value that as much as any of you. I consider it a very graceful thing, and a proper thing, for every human creature to know what the implement which he uses in communicating his thoughts is and how to make the very utmost of it. I want you to study Demosthenes and know all his excellences. At the same time, I must say that speech does not seem to me on the whole to have turned to any good account.

## RETORTIAL ADDRESS

Why tell me that a man is a fine speaker if it is not the truth that he is speaking? Phocion who did not speak at all, was a great deal nearer hitting the mark than Demosthenes. He used to tell the Athenians— You can't fight Philip. You have not the slightest chance with him. He is a man who holds his tongue: he has great disciplined armies, he can bang anybody you like in your cities here: and he is going on steadily with an unvarying aim towards his object, and he will infallibly beat any kind of men such as you going on raging from shore to shore with all that rampant nonsense. Demosthenes said to him one day—"The Athenians will get mad some day and kill you." Yes," Phocion says, "when they are mad, and you, as soon as they get sane again."

All these considerations, and manifold more connected with them—innumerable considerations, resulting from observation of the world at this moment—have led many people to doubt of the salutary

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effect of vocal education altogether. I do not mean to say it should be entirely excluded, but I look to something that will take hold of the matter much more closely and not allow it slip out of our fingers and remain worse than it was. For if a good speaker—in eloquent speaker—is not speaking the truth is there a more horrid kind of object in creation? Of such speech I hear all manner and kind of people say it is excellent, but I care very little about how he said it, provided I understand it, and it be true. Excellent speaker! but what if he is telling me things that are untrue, that are not the fact about it—if he has formed a wrong judgment about it—if he has no judgment in his mind to form a right conclusion in regard to the matter? An excellent speaker of that kind is, as it were, saying—‘Ho, every one that wants to be persuaded of the thing that is not true, come hither. I would recommend you to be very chary of that kind of excellent speech.’

into it very hard when I was translating it and it has always dwelt in my mind as about the most remarkable bit of writing that I have known to be executed in these late centuries. I have often said there are ten pages of that which if ambition had been my only rule I would rather have written than have written all the books that have appeared since I came into the world. Deep deep is the meaning of what is said there. They turn on the Christian religion and the religious phenomena of Christian life — altogether sketched out in the most airy graceful, delicately-wise kind of way — so as to keep himself out of the common controversies of the street and of the forum yet to indicate what was the result of things he had been long meditating upon. Among others, he introduces in an aerial flighty kind of way, here and there a touch which grows into a beautiful picture — a scheme of entirely mute education, at least with no more speech than is absolutely necessary for what they have to do

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Three of the wisest men that can be got are met to consider what is the function which transcends all others in importance to build up the young generation which shall be free from all that perilous stuff that has been weighing us down and clogging every step and which is the only thing we can hope to go on with if we would leave the world a little better, and not the worse of our having been in it for those who are to follow. The man who is the eldest of the three says to Goethe "You give by nature to the well-formed children you bring into the world a great many precious gifts, and very frequently these are best of all developed by nature herself with a very slight assistance where assistance is seen to be wise and profitable, and forbearance very often on the part of the overlooker of the process of education: but there is one thing that no child brings into the world with it, and without which all other things are of no use." Wilhelm, who is there beside him, says, "What is that?" "All

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who enter the world want it says the eldest, "perhaps you yourself. With him says, "Well, tell me what it is."

"It is," says the eldest, "reverence—*Ehrfurcht*—Reverence! Honour done to those who are greater and better than you without fear—distinct from fear. *Ehrfurcht*—the soul of all religion that ever has been among men or ever will be. And he goes into practice this. He practically distinguishes the kinds of religion that are in the world and he makes out three reverences. The boys are all trained to go through certain assuulations, to lay their hands on their breast and look up to heaven, and they give their three reverences. The first and simplest is that of reverence for what is above us. It is the soul of all the Pagan religions—there is nothing better in man than that. Then there is reverence for what is around us or about us—reverence for our equals and to which he attributes an immense power in the culture of man. The third is reverence for what is beneath us—to

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learn to recognize in pain, sorrow, and contradiction, even in those things, odious as they are to flesh and blood—to learn that there lies in this a priceless blessing. And he defines that as being the soul of the Christian religion—the highest of all religions, a height, as Goethe says—and that is very true even to the letter, as I consider—a height to which the human species was fated and enabled to attain, and from which having once attained it, it can never retrograde. It cannot descend down below that permanently. Goethe's idea is

Often one thinks it was good to have a faith of that kind—that always, even in the most degraded, sunken, and unbelieving times, he calculates there will be found some few souls who will recognize what that meant; and that the world, having once received it, there is no fear of its retrograding. He goes on then to tell us the way in which they seek to teach boys—in the sciences particularly, whatever the boy is fit for. Wilhelm left his own boy

there, expecting they would make him a Master of Arts, or something of that kind and when he came back for him he saw a thundering cloud of dust coming over the plain, of which he could make nothing. It turned out to be a tempest of wild horses managed by young lads who had a turn for hunting with their groom. His own son was among them and he found that the breaking of colts was the thing he was most suited for. This is what I call the noble Art which I should not make clear to you by any definition unless it is clear already. I would not attempt to define it as music painting and poetry, and so on it is in quite a higher sense than the common one and in which I am afraid most of our painters poets and music men would not pass muster. He considers that the highest path to which human culture can go and he watches with great industry how it is to be brought about with men who have a turn for it.

Very wise and beautiful it is. It gives one an idea that something greatly better



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is possible for man in the world. I confess, it seems to me it is a shadow of what will come, unless the world is to come to a conclusion that is perfectly frightful, some kind of scheme of education like that presided over by the wisest and most sacred men that can be got in the world, and watching from a distance—a training in practicality at every turn, no speech in it except speech that is to be followed by action, for that ought to be the rule as nearly as possible among them. For rarely should men speak at all unless it is to say that thing that is to be done, and let him go and do his part in it, and say no more about it. I should say there is nothing in the world you can conceive so difficult, *primâ facie*, as that of getting a set of men gathered together—rough, rude, and ignorant people—gather them together, promise them a shilling a day, rank them up, give them very severe and sharp drill, and by bullying and drill—for the word “drill” seems as if it meant the

treatment that would force them to learn — they learn what it is necessary to learn — and there is the man, a piece of an immortal machine — a wonder of wonders to look at. He will go and obey one man and walk into the cannon's mouth for him and do anything, whatever that is commanded of him by his general officer. And I believe all manner of things in this way could be done if there were anything like the same attention bestowed. Very many things could be re-organized and organized into the mute system of education that Goethe evidently admires there. But I believe when people look into it it will be found that they will not be very long in trying to make some efforts in that direction, for the saving of human labour, and the avoidance of human misery would be unaccountable if it were set about and begun even in part.

STEVENSON

## Walking Tours

It must not be imagined that a walking tour is some wild hare-brained fancy, or merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good and none more vivid, in spite of cutting disadvantages than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque but of certain jolly humours—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack on or takes it off with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the arrival. Whatever he

does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain. It is this that so few can understand: they will either be always lounging or always at five miles an hour; they do not play off the one against the other, prepare all day for the evening, and all evening for the next day. And, above all, it is here that your overwalker fails of comprehension. His heart rises against those who drink their curacoa in liqueur glasses, when he himself can swill it in a brown John. He will not believe that the flavour is more delicate in the smaller dose. He will not believe that to walk this unconscionable distance is merely to stupefy and brutalise himself, and come to his inn, at night, with a sort of frost on his five wits, and a starless night of darkness in his spirit. Not for him the mild luminous evening of the temperate walker! He has nothing left of man but a physical need for bedtime and a double night cap: and even his pipe, if he be a

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smoker, will be sorrowless and disenchanted. It is the fate of such an one to take twice as much trouble as is needed to obtain happiness and miss the happiness in the end. He is the man of the proverb in short who goes further and fares worse.

Now to be properly enjoyed a walking tour should be done upon alone. If you go in a company or even in pairs it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name. It is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. A walking tour should be gone upon alone because freedom is of the essence because you should be able to stop and go on, and follow this way or that as the freak takes you, and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker nor nudge in time with a girl. And then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take colour from what you see. You should be as a pipe for any wind to play upon.

I cannot see the wit says Hazlitt 'of

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walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country."—which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow to jar on the meditative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveller feels more than coldly towards his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the hedge and, like Christian on a similar occasion, "give three leaps and go on singing." And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic: the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the straps over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared

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from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods this in which a man takes the road is the best. Of course if he will keep thinking of his anxieties if he will open the merchant Abudah's chest and walk arm in arm with the hag—why, wherever he is and whether he walk fast or slow the chances are that he will not be happy. And so much the more shame to himself! There are perhaps thirty men setting forth at that same hour and I would lay a large wager there is not another dull face among the thirty. It would be a fine thing to follow, in a coat of darkness, one after another of these wayfarers some summer morning for the first few miles upon the road. This one, who walks fast, with a keen look in his eyes, is all concentrated in his own mind he is up it has been weaving and weaving, to set the landscape to words. This one paces about as he goes among the grasses, he waits by the canal to watch the dragon flies—he leans on the

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gate of the pasture, and cannot look enough upon the complacent kine. And here comes another talking, laughing, and gesticulating to himself. His face changes from time to time, as indignation flashes from his eyes or anger clouds his forehead. He is composing articles, delivering orations, and conducting the most impassioned interviews by the way. A little farther on and it is as like as not he will begin to sing. And well for him, supposing him to be no great master in that art, if he stumble across no stolid peasant at a corner for on such an occasion, I scarcely know which is the more troubled, or whether it is worse to suffer the confusion of your troubadour or the unfeigned alarm of your clown. A sedentary population, accustomed, besides, to the strange mechanical bearing of the common tramp, can in no wise explain to itself the gaiety of these passers-by. I knew one man who was arrested as a runaway lunatic, because, although a full-grown person with a red beard he skipped as he went like a



child. And you would be astonished if I were to tell you all the grave and learned heads who have confessed to me that when on walking tours they sing—and sing very ill—and had a pair of red ears when, as described above the inquisitive peasant plumped into their arms from round a corner. And here lest you should think I am exaggerating is Hazlitt's own confession from his essay 'On German Journeys' which is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it—

'Give me the clear blue sky over my head—save he—and the green turf beneath my feet—a winding road before me—and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths—I laugh I run I leap I sing for joy. Bravo! After that adventure of my friend with the policeman you would not have cared would you to publish that in the first person?' But we have no bravery now-days and even in books must all pretend

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to be as dull and foolish as our neighbours. It was not so with Hazlitt. And notice how learned he is (as, indeed, throughout the essay) in the theory of walking tours. He is none of your athletic men in purple stockings who walk their fifty miles a day three hours' march is his ideal. And then he must have a winding road, the epicure'

Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practice that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration, they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion, and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not so agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk it

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gradually neutralises and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind. We can think of this or that lightly and laughingly, as a child thinks or as we think in a morning doze. We can make puns or puzzle out acrostics and trifle in a thousand ways with words and rhymes but when it comes to honest work when we come to gather ourselves together for an effort we may sound the trumpet as loud and long as we please the great barons of the mind will not rally to the standard but sit each one at home warming his hands over his own fire and brooding on his own private thought.

In the course of a day's walk you see, there is much variance in the mood. From the exhilaration of the start, to the happy phlegm of the arrival the change is certainly great. As the day goes on, the traveller moves from the one extreme towards the other. He becomes more and more incorporated with the material landscape and the open or drunkenness grows upon him with great strides until

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he posts along the road, and sees everything about him as in a cheerful dream. The first is certainly brighter, but the second stage is the more peaceful. A man does not make so many articles towards the end, nor does he laugh aloud; but the purely animal pleasures, the sense of physical well-being, the delight of every inhalation, of every time the muscles tighten down the thigh, console him for the absence of the others, and bring him to his destination still content.

Nor must I forget to say a word on byways. You come to a milestone on a hill, or some place where deep ways meet under trees, and off goes the knapsack, and down you sit to smoke a pipe in the shade. You sink into yourself, and the birds come round and look at you; and your smoke dissipates upon the afternoon under the blue dome of heaven; and the sun lies warm upon your feet, and the cool air visits your neck and turns aside your open shirt. If you are not happy, you must have an evil conscience. You

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may daily as long as you like by the roadside. It is almost as if the millennium were arrived when we shall throw our clocks and watches over the housetop and remember time and seasons no more. Not to keep hours for a lifetime is I was going to say to live for ever. You have no idea unless you have tried it how endlessly long is a summer's day that you measure out only by hunger and bring to an end only when you are drowsy. I know a village where there are hardly any clocks where no one knows more of the days of the week than by a sort of instinct for the time on Sundays and where only one person can tell you the day of the month and she is generally wrong and if people were aware how slow Time journeyed in that village, and what trifles of spare hours he gives over and above the bargain to its wise inhabitants I believe there would be a stampede out of London, Liverpool, Paris and a variety of large towns where the clocks lose their heads and shake the hours out each one faster than the other.

as though they were all in a wager. And all these foolish pilgrims would each bring his own misery along with him, in a watch-pocket ' It is to be noticed, there were no clocks and watches in the much-vaunted days before the flood. It follows, of course, there were no appointments, and punctuality was not yet thought upon. " Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure," says Milton, " he has yet one jewel left, ye cannot deprive him of his covetousness " And so I would say of a modern man of business, you may do what you will for him, put him in Eden, give him the elixir of life—he has still a flaw at heart, he still has his business habits. Now there is no time when business habits are more mitigated than on a walking tour. And so during these halts, as I say, you will feel almost free.

But it is at night, and after dinner, that the best hour comes. There are no such pipes to be smoked as those that follow a good day's march: the flavour of the tobacco is a thing to be remembered, it is so

## WALKING TOURS

dry and aromatic so full and so hot. If you wind up the evening with grog you will own there was never such grog at every sip a jocund tranquillity spreads about your limbs and sweetly in your heart. If you read a book—and you will never do so save by fits and starts—you find the language strangely rich and harmonious words take a new meaning, single sentences possess the ear for half an hour together and the writer endears himself to you at every page by the meekest coincidence of sentiment. It seems as if it were a book you had written yourself in a dream. To all we have read on such occasions we look back with special favour. 'It was on the 10th of April 1798' says Hazlitt with unobtrusive precision 'that I sat down to a volume of the new *Heloise* at the Inn at Langollen over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. I should wish to quote more for though we are mighty fine fellows nowadays we cannot write like Hazlitt. And, talking of that a volume

## STEVENSON

of Hazlitt's essays would be a capital pocket-book on such a journey, so would a volume of *Wine's* songs — and for *Tristram Shandy* I can pledge a fair experience.

If the evening be fine and warm, there is nothing better in life than to lounge before the inn door in the sunset, or lean over the parapet of the bridge, to watch the weeds and the quick fishes. It is then, if ever, that you taste Joviality to the full significance of that audacious word. Your muscles are so agreeably slack, you feel so clean and so strong and so idle, that whether you move or sit still, whatever you do is done with pride and a kingly sort of pleasure. You fall in talk with any one, wise or foolish, drunk or sober. And it seems as if a hot walk purged you, more than of anything else, of all narrowness and pride, and left curiosity to play its part freely, as in a child or a man of science. You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch provincial humours develop themselves before you.



## WALKING TOUR

now is a laughable force, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale.

Or perhaps you are left to your own imprisonments by the fire. You may remember how Burns numbering past pleasures dwells upon the hours when he has been happy thinking. It is a phrase that may well perplex a poor modern girl about on every side by clocks and chimes and hunted even at night by flaming dial-plates. For we were all so busy, and have so many far-off projects to realise, and castles in the fire to turn into solid habitable mansions on a gravel soil, that we can find no time for pleasure trips into the Land of Thought and among the Hills of Vanity. Chained times indeed when we must sit all night beside the fire with folded hands and a changed world for most of us, when we find we can pass the hours without discontent, and be happy thinking. We are in such haste to be doing, to be writing, to be gathering gear to make our voice audible

## STEVENSON

a moment in the dense silence of eternity that we forget that one thing, of which these are but the parts—namely, to live. We fall in love, we drink hard, we run to and fro upon the earth like frightened sheep, and now you are to ask yourself if, when all is done, you would not have been better to sit by the fire at home and be happy thinking. To sit still and contemplate—to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere, in sympathy, and yet content to remain where and what you are—is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness? After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession. And once you are at that, you are in the very humour of all social heresy. It is no time for shuffling, or for big, empty words. If you ask yourself what you mean by fame, riches, or learning, the answer is far to seek; and

## WALKING TOUR

you go back into that kingdom of light imaginations, which seem so vain in the eyes of Philistines perspiring after wealth and so momentous to those who are stricken with the disproportions of the world, and in the face of the gigantic star cannot stop to split differences between two degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco-pipe or the Roman Empire a million of money or a fiddlestick a end

You lean from the window your last pipe reeking, whitch into the darkness your body full of delicious pains your mind enthroned in the seventh circle of content, when suddenly the moon changes, the weathercock goes about and you ask yourself one question more whether, for the interval you have been the wisest philosopher or the most egregious of dookers? Human experience is not yet able to reply, but at least you have had a fine moment and looked down upon all the kingdoms of the earth And whether it was wise or foolish to-morrow a travel

## STEVENSON

will carry you, body and mind, into some  
different parish of the infinite

## NOTES

Line

### VII THE CONVALESCENT

*Lamb Charles (1775—1834)*

was one of the most fascinating of essayists. He is personal without being familiar and scholarly without a touch of pedantry. Boys read his Tales from Shakespeare and grown-up people with equal pleasure go to his Essays or Selections from Dramatic Poetry. Domestic unhappiness finds no echo in his writings, but of the man Lamb we get a very attractive picture indeed.

104

15

*Mare Clausum*—A sea closed to commerce

20

*Tables of the Law*—The Tables of the Roman Laws

## NOTES

Page. Line.

201 19 *In articulo Mortis*—At the moment of death.

202 11 *Tityus*—In Greek fable he was a giant whose body covered nine acres of land

### 203 XX. TREATMENT OF HIS HARES

*Cooper. William* (1731—1800) was a poet, essayist and letter-writer. He was educated for the Law and was called to the bar in 1754. In 1763 he was offered the Clerkship of the House of Lords. He had several attacks of loss of reason, and a great portion of his life was spent in gloom and dejection. Sir J. G. Frazer calls him "one of the best of men and one of the most charming of English poets and letter-writers."

# NOTES

Line

XXI

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

*Hazlitt William* (1778—1830) He studied for the Church, but his meeting with Coleridge in 1798 (described in his essay on 'My First Acquaintance with Poets') changed his plans. He turned his attention to art for a while, but in 1805 finally dedicated himself to literature. His lectures on Shakespeare and English Comic Writers are excellent critical studies, while his *Spirit of the Age* contains shrewd comments on contemporaries. His temper was irascible and domestic life unhappy. Of *On Going a Journey*, Mr Augustine Birrell says that they are compositions

## NOTES

Page. Line

of which no sensible man. who happens to be fond of reading. (and many sensible men are not). can ever grow tired. Of the miscellaneous writer one does not demand settled principles of taste or deep searching criticism: it is enough if he at once arrests. and throughout maintains our attention. if he hurries our sluggish spirit up and down animated pages: if he is never vapid. or humdrum. or foolish. or blatant. or self-satisfied: if he forces us to forget ourselves. and by renewing our delight in books. poetry. plays. pictures. and in the humours and emotions of life. makes us feel that it was really



# NOTES

Page Lane

- worth our while not only to have learned to read but to have gone on reading ever since Stevenson says this essay is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it
- 215 5 "Never less alone etc — Cicero first made this remark in *De Officiis* and it was repeated in Rogers *Human Life*
- 6 "The fields etc — Quoted from Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*
- 216 3 "A friend in the retreat — A quotation from Cowper's *Retirement*
- 14 "May plume etc — From Milton's *Comus*
- 20 *Tilbury* — A kind of carriage
- 217 12 "Sunken wreck — From Shakespeare's *Henry V*
- I 2

## NOTES

Page Line.

- 218 1 " *Very stuff* "—Quoted from  
*Othello*. 1.2.2: it means "the  
element of my inner being."
- 20 " *Out upon.*" etc.—Shakespeare,  
*Henry IV* (I) IV. 3.
- 219 1 *Cobbett*—Political writer of  
the early nineteenth cen-  
tury In the *Spirit of the*  
*Age* Hazlitt wrote an essay  
on him.
- 221 17 " *Give it an,*" etc.—From  
*Hamlet*. I. 2.
- 22 *Pindaric Ode*—Ode in the  
style of the Greek poet  
Pindar (5th century B. C.).
- " *He talked* "—From Beau-  
mont and Fletcher's *Phi-*  
*laster*.
- 224 10. " *Take one's ease* "—*Henry*  
*IV*, (I) III. 3.
20. " *The cups* "—From Cowper's  
*Task*. IV. I.
- 225 1. *Sancho*—In Cervantes' *Don*  
*Quixote*.

# NOTES

Page	Line	
225	7	<i>Procul, etc</i> — A far O be ve a far irreverent ones Vir- gil's <i>Æneid</i> , VI 256
226	11	<i>Unhoused etc</i> — <i>Othello</i> , I 2
227	24	<i>Gribelin</i> (1661—1733)—A line engraver
228	11	<i>Paul and Virginia</i> —By Saint Pierre, translated into Eng- lish in 1796
	15	<i>Madame D' Arblay</i> (1752— 1840)—Better known as Francisca Burney a well- known writer
	18	<i>Nov Eloise</i> —By Rousseau
	25	<i>Bon bouche</i> —A delicious tit- bit
229	19	Coleridge's <i>Lines</i> —From his poem 'Fears in Soli- tude
232	5	<i>Sir Fopling Flutter</i> —A char- acter in a play by Eliza- rege entitled <i>The Man of Mode</i>

# NOTES

Page Line

234 6 *Stonehenge*—A temple on Salisbury Plain. connected with Sun-worship.

13 " *The mind*"—From *Paradise Lost*. I. 254.

20 " *With glistering spires*"—From *Paradise Lost*. III. 550.

24. *Bodleian*—A famous Oxford library, founded in 1598 by Sir Thomas Bodley.

236 10. *Mariner's hymn*—*The Hymn of the Sicilian Mariners*.

237 15 *Johnson*—The reference is to a remark quoted by Boswell. "So it is in travelling a man must carry knowledge with him, if he would bring home knowledge"

## 239 XXII. ON READING OLD BOOKS

9. *Lady Morgan* (1783—1859)  
An Irish poet and novelist.

# NOTES

- | Page | Line |   |
|------|------|---|
| 239  | 11   | <i>Anastasia</i> —A title by Thomas Hope  |
|      | 16   | <i>Delphine</i> —By Madame de Staël   |
| 240  | 8    | <i>Andreie Millar</i> —Published the novel of Fielding  |
|      | 10   | <i>Thurloe</i> (1616-1668)—His State Papers were published in 1742  |
|      | 12   | <i>Temple</i> —His <i>Miscellanea</i> was published in 1640   |
| 243  | 11   | <i>For thoughts</i> —A quotation of Ophelia's pathetic words in <i>Hamlet</i> IV  |
|      | 12   | <i>Fortunatus</i> <i>Wishing Cap</i> —As Mr Bayne points out, the allusion is to the <i>Nights of the Italian Straparola</i> (16th century) |
|      | 18   | <i>Bruscombille</i> —The story referred to is in Sterne's <i>Tristram Shandy</i> III  |

# NOTES

Page	Line.	
243	19.	<i>Peregrine Pickle</i> and <i>Tom Jones</i> are by Smollett and Fielding respectively.
244	11.	<i>The Puppets dallying</i> — <i>Hamlet</i> . III. 2.
	25.	<i>Christian</i> —The Hero of Bunyan's <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> .
247	10.	<i>Parson Adams</i> —A character in Fielding's <i>Joseph Andrews</i> .
	24.	<i>Major Bath</i> and <i>Commodore Trunnion</i> are characters in <i>Peregrine Pickle</i> , and <i>Trim</i> and <i>Uncle Toby</i> in <i>Tristram Shandy</i> .
249	13	" <i>Fate, free-will,</i> " etc.—From <i>Paradise Lost</i> , II. 560.
	21.	<i>Faustus</i> V., 4. 50.
252	11.	<i>Leurre de dupe</i> —A lure, trap for a gull, a fool.
	15.	" <i>A load to sink:</i> "—From Shakespeare's <i>Henry VIII.</i> , III. 2.
254	13	<i>Lord Hamlet</i> —II. 2.

# NOTES

- | Page | Line |   |
|------|------|---|
| 254  | 22   | <i>Great Preacher</i> —Edward Irving was at that time preaching there Hixitt expresses his admiration for him in the <i>Spirit of the Age</i>           |
| 255  | 8    | ( <i>being my stool</i> etc.—A recollection of <i>As You Like It</i> II 1   |
|      | 18   | <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> —Published in 1798 by Wordsworth and Coleridge   |
| 256  | 1    | <i>Valentine</i> —Tattle and Miss Prue are characters in Congreve's play <i>Love for Love</i>   |
|      | 9    | <i>Know my cue</i> — <i>Othello</i> I 2   |
|      | 11   | <i>Intus et in cute</i> —Intimately and in the skin   |
| 257  | 6    | <i>The others</i> — <i>Rambler</i> (1750–52) by Johnson the <i>Adventurer</i> by Hawkesworth the <i>World</i> by Moore the <i>Connaisseur</i> by Colman |

## NOTES

Page Line

- 257 11. *Richardson*—His best-known novels are *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Sir Charles Grandson* and *Pamela*.
- 24 *Mackenzie*—Henry Mackenzie (1745—1831), usually known as “*The Man of Feeling*” after the title of his best-known work.
- 258 15 *Story of the Hawk*—In *De-cauweron*, Novel IX.
- 259 6 “*Giddy raptures*”—From Wordsworth’s *Tintern Abbey*.
22. “*His form*”—*Paradise Lost*.  
I. 591
- 260 2. “*Falls flat*”—*Paradise Lost*.  
I. 460.
- 24 *Junius*—His identity is still disputed, though popularly Sir Philip Francis (Warren Hastings’ adversary) is supposed to have written the *Letters of Junius*.



# NOTES

Page	Line	
261	7	<i>He like an eagle</i> — <i>Corio-</i> <i>Ianus</i> \ o
264	7	<i>Holinshed</i> and <i>Stowe</i> are old chroniclers
16		<i>Persiles and Sigismunda</i> — By <i>Cervantes</i> <i>Galatea</i> also by him appeared in 1583
21		<i>Another</i> <i>harroic</i> —From <i>Wordsworth's</i> <i>harroic</i> <i>Unvisited</i>

## 265 XVIII ON SLEEP

*Hunt James Henry Leigh*  
(1784—1859) was an essa-  
vist and minor poet. He  
is remarkable as a man  
of great influence on his  
contemporaries. At one  
period or another he had  
the friendship of almost  
every prominent man of  
letters. As a writer his  
position is not amongst

## NOTES

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the highest, but he writes  
with ease and grace

265      6   *Sancho*—In Cervantes' *Don*  
                                 *Quixote*.

277 XXIV OLIVER GOLDSMITH

*Scott Sir Walter* (1771-1832). was one of the greatest of English novelists, and a poet especially of the youth. His biographical essays are the work of his later years when financial worry compelled him to work against time, and he showed a heroism that cost him his life. Yet they betray no trace either of haste or of slovenliness. He never strove for effect in his writings. He said what he had to say plainly, not caring for style. His novels are the delight at

# NOTES

Page Line

once of the young and the old

277 10 *Village Preacher*—It is now more generally believed that in the person of the preacher Goldsmith really depicted the character of his brother rather than his father

17 *Vigra teste etc*—"Growing old in widow's weeds

278 5 *Noll*—Diminutive of Oliver

18 *Roman triumph*—Pliny says that the Emperor rode in a chariot with a slave behind him holding a golden crown Tertullian adds the information not verified, that it was the slave's duty constantly to whisper to his master a reminder that he was mortal (Wheler)

# NOTES

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278 19 *Uncle by affinity*—By marriage Goldsmith's mother and Contarine's wife were sisters.

25. *Sizar*—A sizar originally was one who was educated free at a university in return for certain services rendered to the undergraduates. In modern Universities sizarships are merely scholarships without any such condition

280 14. *Brianton*—Goldsmith's cousin.

23. *Poicer*—Probably a mistake for person.'

281 20 *Narrative of George*—In the *Vicar of Wakefield*. XX.

283 13. *Haud. etc.*—"I say this from experience."

284 15. *All a holiday. etc.*—An old colloquial phrase for having no appetite. and so not

# NOTES

- Page Line
- cum to peck ham  
(Wheeler)
- 19 *Journeyman—Day-labourer*
- 25- 11 *Lettres Persanes—Baron de*  
Montesquieu (1689—1755)  
a well-known French writer,  
published in 1721 his  
Persian letters which con-  
tain a trenchant criticism  
of French life and manners
- 290 16 *The Club—The Literary Club*  
founded in 1764 by Sir  
Joshua Reynolds. This  
was a famous haunt of  
almost every eminent man  
of the age—Garrick John-  
son Burke Goldsmith,  
Boswell and others used to  
assemble there
- 291 16 *Retaliation—A brilliant*  
poem by Goldsmith written  
in 1774
- 19 *Garrick—The famous Shakes-  
pearean actor Dr Johnson's*

## NOTES

Page    Line

pupil, of whose death Johnson said that it had eclipsed the gaiety of nations. Here are a few lines of Goldsmith on Garrick :

“Of praise a mere glutton, he  
                                 swallow'd what came,  
 And the puff of a dunce he mistook  
                                 it for fame;  
 Till his relish grown callous, almost  
                                 to disease.  
 Who pepper'd the highest was  
                                 surest to please.”

291      20. *Burke*—The great statesman  
                                 and political philosopher  
                                 of the eighteenth century.  
                                 Goldsmith wrote of Burke :

“Who, born for the universe  
                                 narrow'd his mind,  
 And to party gave up what was  
                                 meant for mankind.  
 Who, too deep for his hearers,  
                                 still went on refining.  
 And thought of convincing, while  
                                 they thought of dining.”

# NOTES

Page Line  
291 23

*Reynolds*—Sir Joshua Reynolds the famous painter and Art-critic of whom Goldsmith said

"His pencil was striking, resistless and grand

His manners were gentle complying and bland  
Still born to improve us in every part

His pencil our faces his manners our heart

292 10

*Sultan*—Johnson was usually called the "Cham of Literature" Cham being a corrupted form of Khin or Lord

14 *Apologue*—Moral allegory

293 11 *Humor*—Author of *History of England*

*Rapin*—Paul de Rapin was the author of *L'Histoire de Angleterre*

# NOTES

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293 11 *Kennet*—Bishop Kennet wrote the *Complete History of England*.

294 14 *Honours of the Sock*—Success as a comic dramatist. Sock was the name of the light shoe worn by the comic actor, as buskin was the name of the high-heeled boot worn by the tragic actor.

298 9. *Ordinary*—A meal at a fixed price.

15 *Templars*—Lawyers belonging to the Inns of Court.

300 14. *Squire Richard*—A character in Vanbrugh's Comedy *The Provoked Husband*.

23. *Speaking character*—A part with some speech, as distinguished from the parts of only "Walking gentlemen."



# NOTES

- Page Line
- 301 17 Colman—Theodore Colman  
(1732—1794) was the  
minister of Covent Garden  
Theatre
- 303 22 Strangury—A painful disease
- 304 7 Inscription— To the memory  
of Oliver Goldsmith Poet  
Naturalist and Historian  
who left untouched hardly  
any kind of writing and  
touched none without adorning it alike in raising  
laughter and tears he was  
a mighty though gentle  
master of the emotions  
in penus exalted living  
and versatile, in language  
lofty clear and graceful  
This monument has been  
erected by the love of  
his comrades, the loyalty  
of his friends, and the  
devotion of his readers  
He was born in Ireland in

# NOTES

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a place called Pallas, in the parish of Forney, in the County of Langford on November 29, 1731; he was educated in Dublin, and died in London April 4 1774."

306 12 *Jenkinson*—Who cheated Dr. Primrose in the *Vicar of Wakefield* (XIV).

22. *Gross of green spectacles*—Jenkinson persuaded the simple Moses in the *Vicar* to exchange the family colt for 'a gross of green spectacles with silver rims and shagreen cases.'

310 2. *Bayes*—A satirical nickname of Dryden, the famous poet and dramatist

313 XXV. THE VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH

*De Quincey, Thomas* (1785—1859)—an essayist of great

Page Line

brilliance His early acquaintance with the Lake Poets led him to settle down at Grasmere in 1809 His habit of taking opium grew so much that in 1813 he took as much as 12000 drops a day His career as a writer began so late as 1821 on the publication of *The Confessions of an English Opium eater* That was followed by numerous essays the Vision of Sudden Death appearing in 1849 He was a French stylist The elegance of his elaborately piled-up sentences falls like cathedral music or gives an abiding expression to the fleeting pictures of his most gorgeous dreams

## NOTES

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- 313 9. *Waterloo*—1815. Napoleon's  
defeat by Wellington
- 315 12 *Jus domini*—Divine law
- 316 1 *Jus gentium*—the Law of  
Nations.
- 24 " *Monstrum.*" etc.—A mon-  
ster. horrible. unshapely,  
gigantic and eyeless.

### 341 XXVI. THE DEATH OF NELSON

*Southey. Robert* (1774—1843)—  
a poet and biographer. His  
lives of Nelson, Wesley and  
Bunyan are excellent in  
their way and his fame  
principally rests on them.  
As a poet he was popular  
in his day. forgotten now.  
He was appointed Poet  
Laureate in 1813.

- 342 4. *Hardy, Sir Thomas* (1769—  
1839), Vice-Admiral. In  
1799 he was Flag-Captain of  
Nelson in the Vanguard.

# NOTES

Page Line  
347 14 *Lady Hamilton* (1761—  
1815)—She was very  
intimate with Nelson

## 353 XVIII THE TRIAL OF WARREN HASTINGS

*Macaulay Thomas Babing-  
ton, Lord* (1800—59) great  
in history and essay and a  
successful politician His  
*History of England* is one  
of the most successful ex-  
amples of history being  
rendered as fascinating as  
romance In criticism and  
biography he achieved con-  
siderable distinction and  
though he was very learned  
and well-informed he never  
allowed his erudition to  
make his writings heavy or  
dull In spite of a certain  
reaction against his style, it  
still attracts by reason of

# NOTES

Page. Line

its many good qualities—  
frequent use of the short  
sentence. balance, modulation.  
epigram, brilliant  
phrasing.

353 *Warren Hastings* (1732—  
1818) was a very successful  
Governor of Bengal. His  
impeachment, on several  
grounds. started in 1788,  
and was finished in 1795.  
The trial cost him £70,000.  
But he was acquitted,  
and ended his days as a  
retired country gentleman  
at Daylesford.

359 8. *Mens æqua*—An even man  
in difficulties.

377 XXVIII. RECTORIAL ADDRESS

*Carlyle. Thomas* (1795—  
1881) was a great literary  
power in the nineteenth  
century. He was a preacher

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of the Gospel of action  
and of silence and yet few  
persons have written as  
much as he His philoso-  
phy of life, one-sided pre-  
judiced and violent though  
it might be was yet on the  
whole sound and healthy  
As a writer his mannerisms  
are on the surface and lend  
themselves with dangerous  
facility to imitation but  
force a rugged eloquence  
poetry sincerity and grim  
earnestness are qualities  
that have won for him  
many admirers The pre-  
sent address, delivered at  
Edinburgh to the Univer-  
sity students is particu-  
larly free from his manner-  
isms

394 13 *Goethe*—The greatest of Ger-  
man poets and dramatists,

## NOTES

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was introduced to English readers by Carlyle who was never tired of preaching "Close thy Byron, open thy Goethe."

### 401 XXIX WALKING TOURS.

*Sterenson. Robert Louis* (1850—94). one of the greatest masters of the essay, is to be read mainly as continuing the tradition of Lamb in introducing the touch of intimacy into his essays as a conscious stylist, as a moralist whose preaching is broken in by flashes of redeeming humour, as one whose sense of harmony and rhythm was extraordinarily developed, and as one who took infinite pains in writing.



# NOTES

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revising polishing recast-  
ing not paragraphs only  
but even single words and  
phrases. His constant ill-  
health did not prevent his  
writings breathing a spirit  
of cheery optimism and  
 zest in life

- 402 12 *Curacao*—A liqueur made  
from the peel of oranges  
the name is that of an is-  
land in the West Indies
- 14 *Brown John*—A large vessel
- 20 *Five Wits*—These are Com-  
mon-sense Imagination  
Fantasy Estimation Mem-  
ory

- 405 67 *Merchant Abudah*—In Rid-  
ley's *Tales of the Genii*  
He was a merchant of  
Baghdad and was haunted  
every night by an old hag
- 408 9 *Epicure*—A follower of Epi-  
curus (B C 342—270) who

## NOTES

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said, "Happiness or enjoyment is the summum bonum of life."

415      14    *Castles in the fire*—Stevenson's variation of "castles in the air."

417      3.    *Philistines*—This was the name given by Matthew Arnold to the middle class which he said was "ignorant, narrow-minded. and deficient in great ideas."